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ABSTRACT

Designed to be a tool for selection and collection development, this first volume of "The Bulletin Storytelling Review" contains 162 recommend-only reviews of storytelling audio- and videotapes produced between 1990 and 1996. This book provides a compendium of material not regularly reviewed in other publications. Tapes by storytellers such as Joe Bruchac, Len Cabral, Donald Davis, Barbara McBride-Smith, J.J. Reneaux, and Laura Simms are reviewed in a format like "The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books," a monthly review journal of books for youth. The titles are arranged alphabetically by storyteller, and each review includes the price, distributor, and grade level. The book concludes with ordering information for each distributor and an index that allows readers to search for tapes by type of story or possible uses. (RS)

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The Bulletin Storytelling Review

Volume I

Recommend-only reviews of storytelling audio- and videotapes, prepared by the staff of The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

Janice M. Del Negro and Deborah Stevenson, editors

ED 428 391

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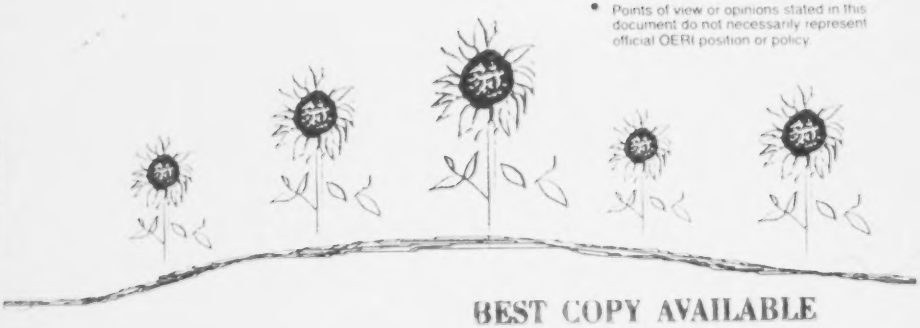

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The Graduate School of Library and Information Science
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Volume 1

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Janice M. Del Negro
and
Deborah Stevenson, editors

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The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, founded in 1945, is a critical reviewing journal of books for youth, housed in the Center for Children's Books and published by the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois. Each year, *The Bulletin* receives between 5,000 and 6,000 children's books; approximately 1,000 titles are selected for review on the basis of literary merit, value to school and public library collections, command of subject, and quality of format. The Center houses a collection of more than 14,000 trade books written for children and more than 1,000 professional and reference books on the history and criticism of children's literature and literature-based programming for youth. The collection includes books reviewed by *The Bulletin* in the last five years and a display of Blue Ribbon Books (chosen by *Bulletin* reviewers as the previous year's best children's books), as well as other titles of historical and critical significance. The non-circulating collection is available for reference and research by teachers, librarians, and other educators. Additional information about *The Bulletin* is available at the Web site http://edfu.lis.uiuc.edu/puboff/bccb.

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The Bulletin Storytelling Review

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Dedication:

Volume I of *The Bulletin Storytelling Review* is dedicated to Shirley Chan, Jennifer DeBaillie, Linda Fenster, Melanie Kimball, and Kathleen McDowell, without whom it would not have been possible.

Introduction

Welcome to *The Bulletin Storytelling Review, Volume I.* This first volume contains recommend-only reviews of storytelling audio- and videotapes produced between 1990-96. All materials were submitted for review in response to a call for tapes sent by direct mail to identified storytellers, posted to various listservs, and advertised in various journals. We received over 300 audiotapes yet fewer than 25 videotapes; when the dust finally settled, we had reviews for 155 audiotapes and 7 videotapes. (What this says about the nature of storytelling is not something we're going to get into here, but it would certainly make an interesting discussion.) Tapes were evaluated on such elements as presentation, content, curriculum uses, and technical clarity. Our reviewing panel consisted of practicing librarians, professional storytellers, and Center staff, selected for their knowledge of both the library and storytelling fields.

This first volume of *The Bulletin Storytelling Review* is designed to be a tool for selection and collection development. As this material is not being reviewed with any regularity in the formal library media, it is our hope to stimulate the collection of storytelling audio- and videotapes in school and public libraries as a way of promoting this traditional art.

We stayed as close to the original *Bulletin* format as possible, arranging titles alphabetically by storyteller, and including information about cost and suggested grade levels. Since this is a recommend-only publication, all included titles can be considered "R" or recommended tapes; starred tapes (*) are those we consider distinguished. Ordering information for tapes is appended at the end of the volume; ISBN numbers are included when available. The index is arranged by types of stories or possible uses—for example, Family Listening, Folk and Fairy Tales, Personal Stories, Supernatural Tales, etc.—followed by an

alphabetical list of storytellers whose tapes fit the particular category. Some titles are listed under more than one category.

This compilation is by no means exhaustive. There is an abundance of available tapes that were either not submitted for review or did not fall within the guidelines for this publication: tapes had to be produced between 1990-96, they had to be aimed at preschool through high school audiences, or they had to be how-to and instructional tapes for professional development. Our plans include additional volumes of *The Bulletin Storytelling Review* in the coming years, reviewing available tapes from 1980 to 2000; an adult supplement is also being considered.

While all the reviews have been extensively edited by Janice Del Negro and Deborah Stevenson to conform to *The Bulletin* style, we would like to formally recognize our advisory panel of tape reviewers:

Shirley Chan, Chicago Public Library
Jennifer DeBaillie, State Library of North Dakota
Elizabeth Ellis, Storyteller
Elizabeth Gremore Figa, University of Illinois
Janice Harrington, Champaign Public Library
Cynthia Helms, Centennial High School Media Center
Pamela McCuen, Cambridge Public Library
Kathleen McDowell, The Center for Children's Books
Helen Rosenberg, St. Scholastica High School Media Center
Anne Shimojima, Braeside School Library Media Center

We sincerely thank all our reviewers for their time, talent, and expertise. Their unique points of view, combined with their unfailing insight into the art and craft of storytelling, were invaluable contributions to this publication.

The range of stories and storytelling included in Volume I of *The Bulletin Storytelling Review* is oceans wide and fathoms deep; but despite the volume's depth and breadth, it is, as Howard Pyle once said, "only the beginning of wonder."

Janice M. Del Negro, Editor

Reviews

Anderson, Mike *The Big Hairy Spider & Other Scary Songs & Stories.* Mike Anderson, 1992 48 min.
Audio Cassette $11.00
Dist. by Music Works Gr. 3-8

This great collection of kid-pleasing, semi-scary stuff is well told and well presented, and it makes excellent use of sound effects and accompanying music. The tape opens with the Christmas tale "Aunt Jessica's Story," about a little girl, her favorite uncle, and a ghostly visitation. Anderson's "The Thumb" is a fabulous personalized version of the urban legend of "The Hook," complete with a mad bicycle ride through dark woods, and a railroad ghost saves a dangerously daring boyhood friend in "Billy Higgs." "The Ghost Bell" is a haunting *a capella* melody about the sinking of the excursion steamboat *Columbia* that listeners will find hard to forget; that story and "The McIntyre Homestead," about the confrontation between a prairie homesteader and a shapeshifting panther, would be a boon for American history classes. Anderson is a strong musician with a pleasant voice, and the accompanying songs (humorous, original, and traditional) are handily interspersed among the tales. Extensive notes and times for the individual stories are included.

Anderson, Mike *Riding Trees.* MW Productions, 1996 41 min.
Audio Cassette $11.00
Dist. by Music Works Gr. 4-12

A rollicking and robust collection of boyhood stories is highlighted by Anderson's remembered friendship with his boyhood best pal, Denny. Those who have had such a best friend will be reminiscing, and those who haven't will be wishing they had. The tape opens with a funny

original song, which is followed by a tale about Anderson's mother, a hot-air register, and a five-gallon can of peas that illustrates the folly of trying to put one over on your mom. Anderson's story about a childhood move to a new school is replete with all the anger and misgivings that a passionate third-grader can possess, emotions only relieved by friendship with his next door neighbor, Denny. The remaining two stories concentrate on the Mike and Denny adventures; there's a tale about a "get rich quick" scheme ("The Return of the Poultrygeist") and a paean to boyhood folly and friendship ("Riding Trees"). Anderson's personal style is involving and inviting, and his personal tales are well-crafted. The attractive graphics and notes for each story are a definite plus on a tape that is bound to elicit similar reminiscences from adult and child listeners alike.

ARMSTRONG, JENNIFER *Song Spun Stories;* music by Jennifer Armstrong. Jennifer Armstrong, 1995 55 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Jennifer Armstrong PS-Gr. 4

The opening story, Armstrong's version of "How Jack Fills Up the House," sets the tone for this downhome-style tape. The wily (and in Armstrong's telling, goofy) Br'er Rabbit outwits an alligator who has caught him on his way home from a square dance and threatens to "goozle out his gizzard" in "Br'er Rabbit and the Alligator"; a "big, bad, mean-tempered, rotten, no-good, ornery, ugly hunter" who arms himself with a "knife, sword, spear, bow and arrow, gun, and nuclear bomb" cannot destroy the Malaysian "Freedom Bird," who rises up singing no matter how many times he is killed; and the Scottish "McTavish" gets his wish to play the bagpipes thanks to a generous mermaid. Armstrong has a strong singing voice, and she is a dramatic, expressive teller. All of her stories are interspersed with fine snatches of traditional song, fiddle, and bagpipe music, and the tape concludes with the delightful tune "Kitty Alone." Minimal source notes are included.

BALTUCK, NAOMI *Crazy Gibberish and Other Story Stretches (From a Storyteller's Bag of Tricks);* music by Naomi Baltuck. Naomi Baltuck and Linnet, 1993 45 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00 (Baltuck), $12.00 (Linnet Books)
Dist. by Naomi Baltuck and Linnet Books * PS-Gr. 4

This is an enthusiastic collection of songs and stretches, short rhymes, calls and responses, and other program fillers that will have young listeners happily chanting along. Included are a musical version of "Who Stole the Cookie from the Cookie Jar?," the physical participatory chant "Hi, My Name is Joe," and the humorous parody song "Glory, Glory

How Peculiar!" A boon for beginning storytellers or storytime-givers, this tape contains examples of successful material to use with youngsters in a programming setting, whether in the public library, media center, or park district. Baltuck does an expert job of communicating her enthusiasm for her work, and the kids who contribute as singers and participators are clearly having a great time. Even if you already have Baltuck's print version of *Crazy Gibberish* in your collection, this cassette is not superfluous. It will contribute a bunch of crowd-pleasing songs and stretches to your repertoire, and it is certain to become a favorite among young listeners.

BATES, DAVIS *Family Stories.* Davis Bates, 1995. 51 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Davis Bates Gr. 7-12

In an attractive voice that invites listeners in with its deep tonal richness and underlying chuckle, storyteller Davis Bates tells four personal stories of his youth in New England. Encouraging listeners to follow his example and retrieve the memory treasures of childhood and family, Bates tells of his growing-up experiences and his impressions of people and events, of family traditions and remembered wisdom. The stories operate on a number of levels, often having stories within stories that enrich the narrative and make it more universal than personal. "Gramp Bates" tells a story to get Bates and his brothers to sleep; "The Ring Story" is the gently touching tale of his grandfather Allen's death and legacy; Bates' father tells him the story of a ghostly lobster man that mitigates his horror at having to wear a raincoat over his Halloween costume in "A Rainy Halloween"; and "George Frizzel Shovels Snow" is a true tale about how one community pulls together to sustain itself. These stories have a quiet humor and familiarity that will nourish listeners as only fond memories of family and homeplace can.

BEEKMAN, JEANNINE PASINI *Turn Up Your Imagination: Participation Stories.* Spellweaver Productions, 1995. 55 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Spellweaver Productions PS-Gr. 3

Recorded live with an elementary-school audience, this tape consists of four traditional folktales in which the very well-behaved listeners participate by repeating key words and phrases. Included is the tale "A Fox in One Bite," about a tricky fox who changes into various shapes but is outwitted by a clever girl; a lively telling of "How Anansi Got His Bald Head," in which trickster spider Anansi burns his head while stealing yam stew; and an expanded version of "The Turnip," in which a little old man longs to win a prize ribbon at the county fair with a

great big enormous turnip. In the final story, "When the Rooster Was King of the Cats," a greedy rooster threatens the cats with the fire in his red comb until they discover his lie and teach him a lesson. There are some ambient noise problems, and the audience seems to be a bit coached, but Beekman tells her adaptations clearly and rhythmically, her attractive voice communicating contagious enthusiasm. Notes give print sources for each tale.

BEEKMAN, JEANNINE PASINI *Under a Texas Sun: Animal Stories.* Spellweaver Productions, 1995 60 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Spellweaver Productions PS-Gr. 4

Beekman's melodic voice serves her well as she gives these four animal stories from various traditions a southwestern flair. Her frenetic "Talking Turtle" learns the hard way to keep his mouth shut; "Hermano Coyote and Señor Yellow Jacket" is a cumulative tale of a greedy coyote who gets a sorry surprise when he sticks his paw into Yellow Jacket's bag; the *pourquoi* tale of "Why Rattlesnake Always Warns Us" tells how Rattlesnake acquired the gifts of fangs, venom, and rattler; and the Alabama-Coushatta tale "How the Sun Came to Be in the Sky" lyrically relates how Buzzard and Wren return the sun to his rightful home. Beekman's gently modulated voice characterizations add humor and zest to these thoughtful tales, and tellers looking to expand their repertoires would do well to give them a close listen. Motif numbers for each tale are included in the notes.

BELL, JERRY AND NANCY BELL *True Tree Tales With Celtic Roots! Vol.2*; music by Jerry and Nancy Bell. Jerry and Nancy Bell, 1995 Approximately 60 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Celtic Celebration Gr. 3-8

Traditional music, folktales, and original tales make up this appealingly energetic offering. Alternating music and story, the tape includes the romantic "The Very First Tree," about the origins of the flute and the harp; a *pourquoi* story about "The Nightingale"; an adaptation of "The Peddler of Ballaghadereen," entitled "The Peddler's Oak"; and "The Sporran Tree," a retelling of the traditional tale of a captured leprechaun who keeps his treasure through trickery. Jerry Bell is a straightforward, easy-listening sort of teller, with few vocal tricks or distractions; Nancy Bell uses character voices throughout her tellings. The music is instrumental, except for a rollicking version of the traditional song "The Rattling Bog" (sung with "guest leprechauns") that will have listeners singing along in no time and then begging to hear it again.

BENDIBURG, TERSI AGRA *The Woman at the Loom: Folktale Heroines of Latin America and Beyond.* Tersi A. Bendiburg, 1996. 62 min.
Audio Cassette. $10.00
Dist. by Tersi A. Bendiburg * Gr. 7-12

The women in these stories evince some of the most admirable human character traits: generosity, moral strength, love, loyalty, and wisdom. The stories are told in English with some interspersed Spanish words and phrases translated for the English speaker. Four of the five tales are adapted from the Latin American folk tradition. "A Legend from South Georgia" tells of the ill-fated love between a Spanish princess and an American sailor; a wrenching variant of the tragic "La Llorona" limns the fatal love between a Spaniard and an Indian woman. "Woman of the Wood" is a tale of more promising love, wherein a carver, tailor, and teacher turn a tree branch into a beautiful, intelligent woman whom they each desire to possess. Both "Arcia," from the Latin American tradition, and "One My Darling," from the Afro-Haitian folk tradition, are stories of cruel mothers and generous daughters, but their overwhelming theme is one of compassion. Bendiburg, possessing a melodic singing voice and an elegant delivery, is a fluid, expressive teller. Her smooth, comforting tone distinguishes between the various characters with gentle fluctuations in volume, intensity, and pacing. Her use of *a cappella* singing in Spanish enhances an already rewarding listening experience.

BEN IZZY, JOEL *The Beggar King and Other Tales From Around the World*; music by Sirba. Joel ben Izzy, 1992. 58 min.
Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-9631129-1-0. $10.00
Dist. by Old City Press and SILO Gr. 4-12

Recorded live, this potpourri of folktales from the Jewish and other world traditions showcases ben Izzy's knack for combining humorous stories into a medley on a particular theme. He effectively weaves connecting threads between stories he has collected and original stories based on his own experiences. From Ireland comes "The King's Riddles," in which a storyteller outwits an unkind king; Jewish "Stories of the Fools of Chelm" are interspersed with similar anecdotes about foolish California-ites. "Be Polite" and "The Pickpocket" are two traditional stories about babies followed by ben Izzy's own experiences as a new dad. Stories of Jerusalem are introduced with the teller's own anecdote about his experiences in the old city in a place called "Mohammed Ali's Green Door Pizza Oven," where the proprietor makes "pita pizzas" and tells tales to his customers. An adaptation of "The Beggar King" (from Howard Schwartz's *Elijah's Violin and Other Jewish Fairy Tales*,

BCCB 10/83) follows, and the tape concludes with the traditional "Tale of Two Brothers," about the the origin of the site of Jerusalem. His comfortable, down-to-earth way of telling brings ben Izzy close to his listeners. The teller provides thorough explanations and introductions to his tales; interludes by the group Sirba enhance each story with musical motifs from each tale's country of origin.

BEN IZZY, JOEL. *Buried Treasures: A Storyteller's Journey*; music by the Adeline Radio Orchestra. Joel ben Izzy, 1995. 56 min.
Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-9631129-2-9. $10.00
Dist. by Old City Press and SILO. Gr. 4-12

As in *The Beggar King* reviewed above, ben Izzy masterfully interweaves personal tales and traditional Jewish tales, the first here about his relationship with his father and the latter about the clever fool Hershel of Ostropol and the poor tailor Jacob ben Yekel. In addition, ben Izzy tells a story within a story—a Haitian *pourquoi* tale about the origin of storytellers. It is a testament to ben Izzy's skill as a teller that the personal and traditional tales comment on and mirror each other. Like Hershel, ben Izzy's father was a poor dreamer who could laugh even when times got tough. Like Jacob ben Yekel, ben Izzy had to travel far before he realized that the richest treasures can be found at home. ben Izzy gives each story a unique flair that adds both amusement and pathos to his personable delivery. No source notes are included.

BEN IZZY, JOEL. *The Green Hand and Other Ghostly Tales from Around the World.* Joel ben Izzy, 1995. 56 min.
Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-9631129-4-5. $10.00
Dist. by Old City Press and SILO. Gr. 4-12

Joel ben Izzy takes some old ingredients from standard urban legends and folk motifs and mixes them into new recipes, demonstrating his knack for taking the traditional and making it personal. "Creepy Car Tales" includes a vanishing hitchhiker story that happened to a "friend of a friend"; "How I Got Bill the Chicken" will be easily recognized as an elaborate exposition of the familiar tale about the obnoxious character who shoves a knife into a grave, petrifying himself when he unknowningly fixes his own jacket to the ground. A hilarious rendition of Robert Service's "The Cremation of Sam McGee" opens Side Two, followed by two Jewish legends of King Solomon and his encounters with death. The title story is set in Italy and relates the haunting of a school by the mysterious "Green Hand," which ben Izzy apparently transported to California. (The punchline of this tales depends on visual

schtick, so the conclusion is a bit anticlimactic.) ben Izzy's sense of humor is a bubbling undercurrent throughout the tales, and the audience's obvious appreciation will add to listeners' enjoyment of the tape. Musical bridges between each tale support the spooky, somewhat kitschy delivery. Minimal source notes are given.

BEN IZZY, JOEL *Stories from Far Away*; music by David Julian Gray. Joel ben Izzy, 1991 57 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-963129-0-2 $10.00
Dist. by Old City Press and SILO * Gr. 4-12

In this live recording, Joel ben Izzy's humorous tellings of traditional tales are interspersed with personal experience stories and anecdotes. Brief tales of wise men—King Solomon, Judge Ooka, and Nasrudin—create the mood for the longer tales that follow. A traditional folktale from China, relating how what seems like a blessing can sometimes be a curse and vice versa, is followed by a personal story involving a bee sting on the tongue. His interpretation of the Jewish stories of the "Fools of Chelm" is outstanding, and his affection and appreciation for these simple wise fools is evident in each tale. The final story, of a king who leaves his four daughters for ten years, giving them each a gift of a single grain of rice, brings to life the famous mathematical problem and makes a good case for using stories (like the treasure of the single grain of rice) again and again by passing them along. ben Izzy's stories are pithy and full of humor, and his friendly, conversational style is involving and accessible. The stories are marvelously punctuated by the klezmer clarinet of musician David Gray, making this a complete and delightful listening experience.

BIRCH, CAROL *Careful What You Wish For.* Frostfire, 1993 56 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Carol Birch * Gr. 4-12

These retellings of literary and traditional tales have a sly humor and appealing wit that suits Birch's elegant style and controlled delivery. Melinda Alice ("Malice") gets her deserved comeuppance in Judith Gorog's slickly plotted "Those Three Wishes"; the haunting "Peter Kagan and the Wind" tells of a man saved from the sea by his devoted selkie wife; the traditional "Fisherman and His Wife" has both humor and a subtly delivered moral; "Careful Wishing," a poem by storyteller Heather Forest, gently warns against making unspecific wishes; and Ruth Sawyer's "Wee Meg Barnileg and the Fairies," is masterfully told in the strong concluding spot on the tape. Birch's voice is fluid with expression and feeling, the range of emotions satisfyingly resonant for

both character and narrative voices. Superlatively produced and presented, this is a tape that belongs in any core collection of storytelling materials.

BIRCH, CAROL *Image-ination: The Heart (and True Art) of Storytelling.*
Frostfire, 1991 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Carol Birch Professional

Birch succinctly and accurately describes this audiotape as "guided imagery exercises to assist you in bringing character and setting into sharper focus." This is a special-audience tape, a cassette aimed at practicing storytellers interested in achieving additional depth in their communication of story characters and settings. Side One, "Character," includes exercises to aid in the description of physical characteristics and then moves into imagining the personality traits and inner lives of story characters. Side Two concentrates on "Setting," including geography, terrain, characteristics of the era or age (whether the environment is rural, urban, or other), architecture, emotional nuance, temperature, light, etc. Birch has a mellow, seductive voice that lends itself very well to this guided-imagery experience. The steps toward achieving stylistic clarity in individual storytelling are broken into nicely manageable increments, making this audiotape useful to beginning or experienced tellers, teachers, and storytelling coaches.

BLACK, JUDITH *Glad to Be Who I Am;* music by Victor Cockburn.
Yellow Moon Press, 1990 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-938756-18-4 $9.95 (Yellow Moon), $10.00 (Tidal Wave)
Dist. by Yellow Moon Press and Tidal Wave Productions Gr. K-6

When Black's giant eats the entire Republican Town Committee, you know this is not your typical "Molly Whuppie" or your typical storytelling tape. Black uses her unique voice to present traditional tales and original stories, and she is at her best when putting her personal spin on traditional folktales such as "Molly Whuppie" and "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." Both stories are filled with strong vocal characterizations, a distinct narrator's voice, audience interaction, humor, kid appeal, and a judicious sprinkling of contemporary and political asides to pique the interest of adult listeners. Black's original stories contain developmentally appropriate themes that will also entertain her intended audience, although her portrayal of some voices in dialect can be distracting. The most captivating and charming of the original stories is "Daydreaming," which she performs with her son. A lively

musical accompaniment and Black's enthusiastic singing voice are woven throughout the tape. Source notes are provided.

BLACK, JUDITH *The Homefront.* Tidal Wave Productions, 1993. 90 min. Audio Cassette $12.00
Dist. by Tidal Wave Productions Gr. 6-12

Black thinks Rosie the Riveter deserves a prominent place in American folklore, and she goes a long way toward making that happen on Side One of this tape about the Third Front, the homefront, during World War II. Rosie never goes home—she works continuous shifts in disguise, as the Irish Rosie faces being the first woman on the line, as the Jewish Rosie writes Yiddish curses on bomb casings, as the African-American Rosie puts a rabidly racist foreman in his rightful place. Side Two features "From Her Arms to His," in which Eta Bedowski writes tender letters to her soldier husband, Thomas, reminiscing about their youth and their courtship, telling him the homefront news, and confiding her hopes for their future. Black's vocal characterizations are effective, and the emotionality of her voice suits the emotionality of her stories. The pacing is solid, the comic timing is precise, and details are remarkably rich. The use of dialect is somewhat inconsistent and there is an occasional awkwardness in plot development, but these stylistic quirks are secondary to the inspirational content of Black's material.

BLACK, JUDITH *Oops Ma!: Songs and Stories of Family Life;* music by Judith Black and Victor Cockburn. Approximately 55 min. Tidal Wave Productions, 1994
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Tidal Wave Productions Gr. K-3

The subtitle describes Side One of this offering well: Black leads listeners through the craziness of the morning rush of getting her son off to school, a pell-mell dash peppered with realistic examples of parent-child confrontation, fanciful depictions of reconciliation, and snatches of song. Side Two contains two stories: "The Real Sleeping Beauty," about a young girl who dreams of dancing the Sleeping Beauty ballet, creating a world in which she is unconditionally loved in spite of the adults and siblings that deny her value; and the occasionally rhyming "Gregory's Story," in which a boy, after refusing to clean his room and go to bed (to the increasing exasperation of his mother), ends the night by fighting off the marauders of his imagination. The song "Take Me by the Hand" functions as the connecting bridge between stories and provides a sense of melodic continuity. The teller speaks directly to her young audience, and while the cozy presentation may irritate adult listeners, youngsters are going to fall right in step with Black and her characters.

BOBROW, LAURA J. *Grimm Tales Retold*; music by Laura J. Bobrow. Laura J. Bobrow, 1991. 43 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Laura J. Bobrow PS-Gr. 4

Three familiar stories from the Brothers Grimm, "The Frog Prince," "The Twelve Dancing Princesses," and "Red Riding Hood," are simply and cleanly told, with Bobrow adding some personal touches of her own (such as the reason why the wolf does not eat Little Red right there in the woods). The fourth story, "The Seven Brave Brothers," is Bobrow's reworking of a more obscure Grimm story, "The Seven Swabians." In this tongue-in-cheek tale, the seven "brave" brothers encounter a beetle, a hare, and a frog, and manage to triumph over all three. Bobrow's voice is expressive, and her timing is excellent. Solid, straightforward storytelling, this would be a good source of examples when studying marchen, fairy tales, folklore, or Germany.

BRACHFELD, RENEE AND MARK NOVAK *King Solomon's Daughter*. Renee Brachfeld & Mark Novak, 1995. 56 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Renee Brachfeld and Mark Novak Gr. 4-12

This live recording of traditional Jewish song and story will find a permanent place in any storytelling collection. Brachfeld and Novak do an admirable job of combining music and narrative as they tell the romantic tale of King Solomon's daughter, who finds her destined husband despite the efforts of her father; generous hearts result in small miracles in the humorous "Challahs in the Ark"; a man of faith is deliciously rewarded in the Passover story of "The Magician." Each tale is beautifully crafted, the language is precise, and the delivery is clean. Background music very occasionally threatens to overwhelm the narrative, but overall it contributes to the effectiveness of the tales. Minimal source notes are included.

BREWER, MARY ANN *La Cucarachita and Other Lively Tales/La Cucarachita y otros cuentos alegres*. Mary Ann Brewer, 1995. 56 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Mary Ann Brewer Gr. K-3

Four traditional tales—the European "The Boy and the Goats," the English "The Three Bears," the Venezuelan "The Fox, the Mole, and the Moon," and the Latin American "La Cucarachita"—are presented in two languages on this kid-pleasing tape. Brewer tells the stories (in English on Side One, and in Spanish on Side Two) with expression and enthusiasm, including refrains in which child-listeners will enthusiastically join ("Big worms, little worms, itty bitty juicy worms, big worms,

little worms, itty bitty juicy worms, all for me," says the mole Topo in "The Fox, the Mole, and the Moon"). Brewer's presentation gets a bit sing-songy occasionally, but the kids won't mind. Librarians and teachers looking for some easily learned, sure-to-be-successful tales to use with primary graders will appreciate Brewer's affectionate if utilitarian approach. Minimal source notes are included.

BROWN, ROBERTA SIMPSON *The Scariest Stories Ever.* August House, 1992. 46 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-301-9 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 4-8

These original tales written by Brown are typical told-around-the-campfire fare, the type of stories that are passed from listener to listener as "true" urban legends featuring classic elements: a locker-room murderer who removes the tongues of his teenage victims, two teenage girls and a malevolent killer cloud, green slime and noble warrior guardians, and walking corpses. The strongest story is "Fish Bait," where a young fisherman is "hooked" by a supernatural catfish. There are few surprises and the plots are easy to surmise. Common elements in the stories are contemporary settings, cliffhanger pauses, and stereotypical endings that suggest that the evil has not been destroyed and will return. While the production values are high, the delivery has the canned feel of a book-on-tape or a readaloud. Listeners seeking the drama and intimacy of a live storytelling performance will feel dissatisfied, but the fans of Freddy Krueger and R. L. Stine will definitely find something to enjoy.

BROWN, ROBERTA SIMPSON *Scary Stories for All Ages.* August House, 1992. 48 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-302-7 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 4-8

Brown once again adapts and presents original stories, this time from her book *The Walking Trees.* As in *The Scariest Stories Ever*, reviewed above, she tells modern-day suspense stories that would be popular around a bonfire or for any adolescent sleepover. Typically, the stories involve a youthful protagonist who encounters some aspect of the supernatural world: a young girl abducted by a "Rain Thing," a child who is rescued by a dead man, an evil ticket-taker who causes the disappearance and death of teenage victims. Brown depends on intriguing plot elements rather than polished technique to put her stories across, and for the most part she is successful. Point your *Goosebumps* fans at this one, or have a spooky story night of your own.

Bruchac, Joe *Gluskabe Stories.* Yellow Moon Press, 1990. 80 min.
Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-938756-26-5. $9.95
Dist. by Yellow Moon Press Gr. 3-12

"A long time ago my story was out walking around and here is where my story camped." So begins Joe Bruchac's tales of Gluskabe, a supernaturally powerful being possessing human traits. The animals and the world were made by the Creator, but Gluskabe shaped himself from the dust of creation and the earth. These ten stories tell of Gluskabe's journey to wisdom and of his teaching humans and animals how to live in balance with all things. Gluskabe evinces the stern yet loving care of a parent for a child; his lessons are never vengeful and often humorous. Many of the stories could be simply labeled "how and why" or *pourquoi* tales ("Gluskabe and the Skunk" tells how the skunk acquired its odor and white stripe; "The Wind Eagle" explains why the winds are important; "Maple Syrup" recounts how the process of maple sugaring came to be; "Gluskabe and Dzidziz" relates the origins of the lullaby "Rock-a-Bye-Baby," etc.), but that would be a surface reading of these multilayered tales. The inclusion of traditional chants and music helps set a tone that allows listeners to appreciate the humor, message, and values that the stories communicate. Limited source notes are included.

Burrows, Derek *Once Upon a Time: Stories from the Bahamas.* Yellow Moon Press, 1990. 60 min.
Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-938756-25-7. $9.95
Dist. by Yellow Moon Press Gr. 2-6

Burrows spent his childhood in the Bahamas, and his performance style and repertoire reflect this early exposure. His presentation, employing the Bahamian dialect Burrows heard growing up in Nassau, is relaxed but attentive. His stories are a mixture of African and European oral traditions, and listeners will recognize familiar folk motifs. B'Rabby, the Bahamian trickster, has adventures similar to those of Brer Rabbit and Anansi—the three B'Rabby tales include familiar variants such as "B'Rabby, B'Whale and B'Elephant," which tells of the tug-of-war bet B'Rabby makes with both beasts; and "B'Rabby Makes B'Boukee His Cart Horse" wherein B'Rabby tricks and humiliates the always foolish B'Boukee by riding him to his fiancée's house. "The Pepper Tree" is the story of a cruel stepmother who meets her demise due to her greed and selfishness; and "The Gaulin Wife" tells of a heron that takes the form of a woman and marries a man. The recording includes several riddles, which, according to the source notes, are used in Bahamian storytelling to ensure the interest of the children and to keep the adults awake after a long day of work. Burrows is a precise teller with a fine,

strong voice, and although the pace is somewhat slow and measured, both children and parents should appreciate his solid enthusiasm.

CABRAL, LEN *It's How You Say It.* Story Sound Productions, 1996
50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Story Sound Productions Gr. 4-8

This story presentation opens with an original piece about how storyteller Cabral learned about tact from his younger brother ("It's How You Say It"), followed by a selection of traditional tales with appeal across a wide age range. From an Irish folktale about a traveling tinker who finds a story one stormy night, to an American Indian story about "Old Man Winter," to a modern retelling of the Nigerian tale "Why the Sky is Far Away," Cabral has a dynamic, vigorous style that gives the impression of live telling, no mean feat for a studio recording. Cabral seems consistently aware that someone is (or will be) listening, and he tailors his delivery accordingly. His natural, casual narration gives him a strong presence and belies the inherent seriousness that underlies some of his tales. His version of the Limba tale "What Is Strength?" has an offhand humor that makes the chilling conclusion resonate even more memorably. The tape includes two stories also found on his *Stories for the Wee Folk* (reviewed below), "Coyote Dances with the Stars" and "Two Frogs." Very minimal source notes are included.

CABRAL, LEN *Stories for the Wee Folk.* Story Sound Productions, 1996
54 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Story Sound Productions PS-Gr. 4

Len Cabral is a joy to hear in person, and much of his enthusiasm and energy is present in the stories on this tape. His unaffected, expressive delivery lends an immediacy to his narratives as he tells the story of Grandmother Spider, in which the smallest among the animal people saves the earth from drifting away from the sky; the *pourquoi* tale about why coconut has the face of monkey; the fable of the "Two Frogs" who fell into the milk bucket; the clever woman story of Old Woman who outsmarts Jackal, Tiger, and Bear to save her singing pumpkin; a semi-personal tale built around the old folktale "Why Cats Don't Wash Before Eating" about his cat Bubbles; and the American Indian story of what happened when Coyote tried to dance with the stars. Cabral talks directly to his listeners, eliciting their participation in a gently jocular fashion that is effective and inviting. Minimal source notes are included.

CAPEL, MITCH *Grandaddy Junebug Goes to School.* Mitch Capel, 1995 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by MGC Productions Gr. K-3

Capel fills his tape with poetry, chants, song, and participatory story, including "You've Got to Stand for Something or You'll Fall for Anything" and "No Hope in Dope." He uses his stories to encourage children to be safe, avoid drugs, and see the humor in life, and the introductions to the stories (in which Capel calls and the children respond) are fact filled and educational. Poetry by Capel and Paul Laurence Dunbar is interspersed among traditional and original tales, all with a strong underlying message about personal responsibility and self-esteem. Capel uses poetry and drums, rhythm and rhyme to impress his listeners with his obvious message, adding a strong dose of positive reinforcement. Recorded live in a school auditorium filled with laughing school children, Capel's tape suffers slightly from the ambient noise, but those in tune with his message will easily ignore such small encumbrances.

CARSON, RICK *How I Learned to Cuss and Other Stories You Shouldn't Hear.* Rick Carson, 1996 56 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Rick Carson Gr. 7-12

Story jokes, tall tales, and family anecdotes are viewed through a very personal filter in this front-porch-friendly cassette. Carson's telling is in the tradition of the country-store raconteur and reminiscent of the work of Chuck Larkin or Doc McConnell. The majority of the stories end with a punchline, revealing their origins as elaborately embroidered jokes, and indeed, adult listeners may find themselves wondering if the family anecdotes actually happened. Carson gives no source notes, so only experienced listeners or seasoned storytelling festival attendees will recognize works from the oral tradition such as "The New Hoe Handle" or "Be Nice." Although tighter timing would have resulted in a more effective delivery, Carson has a unique voice, and each story sustains interest and brings the sought-after smile.

CHANGARIS, CYNTHIA *I'm Not Sleepy Yet!* Cynthia Changaris, 1995 29 min.
Videocassette ISBN 1-887828-25-7 $20.00
Dist. by Roots & Dreams Publishers PS-Gr. 1

In an informal living-room setting with young children seated on the floor, Changaris uses an acoustic guitar to accompany herself on such traditional crowd pleasers as a Latino version of "The Squeaky Door" (here called "I'm Not Sleepy Yet"), the participatory call-and-response

tale "Going on a Bear Hunt," and songs such as "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star," "This Little Light of Mine," and others. This is a strong example of a really fine preschool storytime, and it would make an excellent instructional video since Changaris effectively models techniques for successful programming for young children. Changaris sometimes loses the tune during the song segments, but young listeners won't mind, and neither will those practitioners looking for some programming hints. Songs, action plays, and stories are age-appropriate, and sources, while not included, will be easy to locate.

Changaris, Cynthia *Spin Me A Tale.* Roots and Dreams Publishers, 1995. 42 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-887828-26-5 $10.00
Compact Disc ISBN 1-887828-27-3 $15.00
Dist. by Roots and Dreams Publishers Gr. K-4

This is a collection of nine stories, mostly traditional folktales with the exception of Francis Caffrey's beloved "Black Bubble Gum," a haunting Halloween story about a piece of gum that comes to life, and "Spin Me a Tale," an original song written by Changaris and her eleven-year-old son. Other stories include the humorous "The Ghost with One Black Eye," "Monkey's Heart" from the Panchatantra; "Epaminondas," a traditional story Changaris learned from her great aunt about a boy who can't do anything right; "The Bird in Hand," a Jewish tale about the lesson learned by two boys who try to trick the rabbi; and "God's Well," a Haitian folktale about the animals who are keepers of God's fresh water and what happens when lizard refuses to cooperate. Changaris' clear and lively telling style makes this a wonderful tool for incorporating multicultural tales into a curriculum or programming series.

Collins, Rives and Julie Shannon *We All Have Songs; We All Have Stories.* Louisa May Alleycat Music, 1995. 58 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-888019-01-8 $10.00
Dist. by Louisa May Alleycat Music and SILO Gr. K-6

This is an impressive combination of stories and songs, and the original compositions by Julie Shannon have a bouncy, show-tune quality. Sung by Collins and Shannon with a chorus of talented children, songs include one in which children guess the names of well-known stories, an irreverent presentation of "Take Me Out to the Ball Game," and a humorous plea for environmental conservation, in which every store and franchise has its place. In between the songs, Collins presents two personal stories: "The Diving Board" is about his daughter's first jump off the high diving board at the local pool; "Caitlyn's Genealogy," a

storyteller's welcome to his first child, is a poetic rendition of a family tree. Both stories, though specific to Collins' family, have an inherent, loving emotionality. The lengthy "Barney Peterson, Middle Kid," is a superb original tale about Barney, a child whose passion for dinosaurs drives everybody nuts until the magical night he helps save a dinosaur excavation site from destruction by developers. Underscored with Julie Shannon's exceptional improvisational piano, the stories are a happy combination of rib-tickling and heartstring-tugging.

DAVIS, DONALD *Christmas at Grandma's.* August House, 1994 45 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-391-4 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 6-12

Davis' memories of childhood Christmases in Appalachia will surely evoke listeners' own stories and memories. Anyone who has ever lived through a Christmas pageant will find familiar themes in "The Children's Christmas Play," a funny, nostalgic story of a theatrical event and its embarrassing finish. "The Year My Brother Almost Died" has Davis, age eight, teaching his younger brother (age six) how to smoke a cigar—"You're just learning, so don't stop. Don't stop!"—with dire consequences, much to the dismay of their mother. "The Red Scooter" pays homage to the loving wisdom of parents who are trying to help their young son hold on to his belief in Santa Claus. Davis' genius is his ability to find the gentle wisdom and humor in simple life events and then to masterfully craft these moments into stories that speak to us all.

DAVIS, DONALD *Jack's First Job.* August House, 1993 56 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-322-1 $12.00
Dist. by August House * Gr. 4-12

Davis does not include formal source notes, but he does begin this recording by telling listeners that these Jack tales are among the fifty or so that he learned at his grandmother's knee. That Davis grew up with these stories is obvious from his well-practiced, easy telling of the four tales in this collection, with Side One featuring foolish Jack and Side Two focusing on Jack's trickier aspects. Davis begins with the popular "Jack's First Job," in which Jack's exceedingly literal interpretations of Mama's instructions leads to the loss of each day's pay in increasingly ridiculous ways. Jack has financial management problems in "Jack Seeks His Fortune" as well, when, not even really sure what a "fortune" is, he makes a series of decidedly unfortunate trades but still winds up on top. Success comes a little more easily on Side Two, or perhaps it just seems that way because Jack has his wits firmly about him. Our hero manages

to win the girl by telling an all-too-credulous king a tale he just can't believe in "Jack Told a Big Tale." Falling amongst thieves in "Jack Stole Some Cows," he must play the thief himself (something he does with little reluctance) before getting a chance to beat the real crooks at their own game. This is a great introduction to Jack tales from a master teller straight out of the Appalachian oral tradition. Factor in good sound quality and a wide age appeal, and you've got a tape whose success is as inevitable as the plucky hero's.

DAVIS, DONALD *Listening for the Crack of Dawn.* August House, 1991. 117 min.
2 Audio Cassettes ISBN 0-87483-147-7 $18.00
Dist. by August House
* Gr. 6-12

Davis' original stories give the flavor of his Appalachian childhood through memorable characters, nostalgic memories, and a few surprises. Four stories on two audiocassettes are impeccably delivered. "Aunt Laura and the Crack of Dawn" is a touching remembrance of a beloved great-aunt who taught Davis the secret joy of getting up early; "The Last Butler in Sulfur Springs" tells how a black man is finally accepted into the white Butler family; "LS/MFT" reveals the pranks of Davis' sixth-grade friends as they earn a coaster bike and keep a lookout for the dreaded Terrell Tubbs; and "A Different Drummer" is an especially moving story of a young man who can't fit into his father's dream. Davis meanders eloquently through colorful characters and events, the tone sometimes gently humorous and sometimes serious, but every one of his stories delivers a powerful emotional punch at its conclusion.

DAVIS, DONALD *Miss Daisy.* August House, 1993. 58 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-320-5 $12.00
Dist. by August House
Gr. 6-12

Two thematically similar tales of eccentric and strong-willed older women differ dramatically in presentation. "Miss Daisy" is a fourth-grade teacher with a unique approach. The school books have spent the year gathering dust while students instead learn via imaginary trips around the world, complete with currency exchanges and mileage calculations ("but she never called it math") and orthographically challenging lists of famous foreign personages and products ("but she never called it spelling"). Davis drifts through a variety of humorous anecdotes demonstrating Miss Daisy's creativity and kindness, but these never quite coalesce into a cohesive story. His vocal pacing, always leisurely, is sometimes halting. Davis' Side Two portrayal of his after-school care is much more vividly and effectively presented as he and his brother spend the afternoons of their youth with the widowed "Miss

Annie," her mentally handicapped daughter Mary Catherine, and a well-loved, well-worn automobile called Ramblin' Rachel. Miss Annie's idea of a good time includes activities such as spending the afternoon "shooting down" local airplanes (always as they're conveniently about to land). The laugh-out-loud vignettes flow into a satisfying narrative which concludes with both humor and insight. Listeners interested in hearing "Miss Annie" in another context can find a live recording (titled "C-R-A-Z-Y") on the National Storytelling Association's *Best-Loved Stories Told at the National Storytelling Festival* (reviewed in this volume).

Davis, Donald *Party People.* August House, 1993. 56 min.
Audio Cassette. ISBN 087483-324-8. $12.00
Dist. by August House
Gr. 7-12

Master storyteller Donald Davis offers two fine stories in his warm, conversational way. His Appalachian twang, distinctive and attractive, adds tremendously to his delivery of these personal tales. In "Party People," a young Donald, hyperkinetically anxious about formally celebrating his birthday for the very first time, is felled by a virus but manages to get into trouble anyway. The second tale, "Otto and Marguerite," is set in Davis' adult life rather than in his childhood; it shares the startlingly moving life story of two classically trained itinerant musicians. Both stories move from humor to pathos as they reinforce the importance of substance over appearance. In addition to being an enriching listening experience, this tape would also be useful for instructors in junior high and above for teaching autobiographical and creative writing, or for sparking discussions about how our values shape our lives and our life stories.

Davis, Donald *Rainy Weather.* August House, 1992. 52 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-299-3. $12.00
Dist. by August House
Gr. 6-12

This is a three-story cycle about storyteller Davis' Uncle Frank, previously met in *Uncle Frank Invents the Electron Microphone* (reviewed in this volume). In "Rainy Weather," Uncle Frank's extraordinary hound dog follows an old trail to track a fox to its new life as a fox fur coat. This tall tale is followed by a description of how Uncle Frank used his gift for language to outwit traveling salesmen ("Uncle Frank Learns to Speak Polish"), and then by the concluding story, in which Uncle Frank cleans up a Missouri post office without lifting a finger ("Uncle Frank Cleans Up the Post Office"). Davis consistently selects the perfect details that help listeners visualize the story, and the result here, while not necessarily as involving as Davis' other recordings, still gives the feeling of rocking on a front porch listening to a favorite uncle spin the story of his life.

DAVIS, DONALD *See Rock City.* August House, 1995 54 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-452-X $12.00
Dist. by August House * Gr. 6-12

North Carolina native Davis tells two stories drawn from his childhood in the Appalachian Mountains. "See Rock City" tells of his Scots-Irish family, their move to a new house, their travails with the family's first electric stove, and their first vacation: a car trip, with two young boys in the back seat, from the North Carolina mountains all the way to Florida. Davis brings listeners back to the days before mandated public kindergarten in a treasure of a story called "Mrs. Rosemary's Kindergarten." Mrs. Rosemary is Davis' teacher, and her gentle wisdom teaches the boy how to accept the death of his new kitten, how to tell important messages, and how to accept someone who is different. It is only years later, after her death, that he realizes how much he really meant to her. Touching and wise, these finely crafted stories are told in Davis' distinctive voice with warmth and gentle humor.

DAVIS, DONALD *Uncle Frank Invents the Electron Microphone.* August House, 1992 43 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-300-0 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 6-12

What listeners will enjoy about *Uncle Frank* is Davis' humorous, vivid characterization of his uncle and other colorful characters. When "Weasel" and "Awful" Ratherton ask to hunt on Uncle Frank's property, Uncle Frank spins a tall tale and uses the Rathertons' natural naiveté to save his squirrels and win the local Democratic election all at the same time. In "Uncle Frank and the Crown Feed Boys," wily Uncle Frank outwits two salesmen by feigning illiteracy and gives his nephew a valuable lesson in how to cuss. While these tales don't have quite the zing of Davis' other recordings, listeners will still enjoy the portrayal of uncle-as-rogue—imagine Brer Rabbit or other trickster figures in human form and you'll have a pretty fair idea of Uncle Frank. These stories were both adapted for telling from Davis' book, *Barking at a Fox Fur Coat.*

DESENFANTS, SHERRY *Haunted Hearts: Tales of Love and Tragedy.* Sherry DesEnfants, 1994 57 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Sherry DesEnfants Gr. 7-12

Each of these half dozen tales is a reflection on the nature of love and its effect on the nature of individuals, whether lover or beloved. Despite a tonal sameness and the occasionally self-conscious delivery, these stories of the rewards and sacrifices required by love will resonate with romance-

inclined junior-high and high-school students. In "Song of the Shepherdess," a young woman dooms her lover through her inability to see him as he really is; the "Woman of the Wood," created by a woodcarver, tailor, and teacher, chooses to love the wise man who offers her her own way; and in Natalie Babbitt's "The Very Pretty Lady," the Devil is confounded by a lady who finds true love in spite of his dastardly machinations. Snatches of song and music enrich DesEnfant's fulsome but heartfelt storytelling. Story sources are noted.

DESPAIN, PLEASANT *Eleven Turtle Tales.* August House, 1995. 70 min. Audio Cassette ISBN 0-7483-425-2. $12.00
Dist. by August House * PS-Gr. 4

Stories from five continents reveal the cunning, wisdom, and patience of Turtle. We learn why California has earthquakes, the way clever turtle won the hand of Miss Python, how Turtle tricks Leopard into sharing his magnificent drum, and how Father Wind finds his four missing sons with the help of his turtle friend. DeSpain's tellings are clear and succinct, the stories all have tight and satisfying plots, and sound effects and a variety of musical instruments add to the effectiveness of the delivery. DeSpain's effervescent personality comes across remarkably well and he communicates his enthusiasm for his material with a grace and style young listeners will find most appealing. Although specific sources are not given, this tape will be useful in folklore units as an example of how one animal character is viewed cross-culturally, and for beginning tellers looking for easy-to-tell variants.

DESPAIN, PLEASANT *Multicultural Tales to Tell.* August House, 1994. 104 min.
2 Audio Cassettes. ISBN 0-87483-345-0. $18.00
Dist. by August House PS-Gr. 4

Twenty folktales on two cassette tapes make up this fine collection, including stories from Asia, Africa, Europe, Central America and North America. In turn funny, clever, witty, and moving, the tales are filled with themes of good rewarded, kindnesses given, and justice served. DeSpain cuts to the heart of each story, bringing out moral themes and showing how folktales reveal the universality of our experiences as human beings. The characters triumph in the end, whether through cleverness or courage, or they are taught a well-deserved lesson. The country or culture of each story is noted, but no specific sources are given. Occasional music and sound effects add to the listening experience, and, like DeSpain's other recordings, this is a rich source for novice tellers looking for basic folktales told in an unassuming yet masterful fashion.

DESPAIN, PLEASANT *Tales to Tell From Around the World, Volume One;* music by Jim Wolfe. August House, 1995 57 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-417-1 $12.00
Dist. by August House PS-Gr. 4

Spice up folktale units and story programs with these ten tales from Africa, Europe, Asia, and North America. Among the characters listeners meet are a clever turkey who tricks a fat mayor into returning stolen gold, a family who finally manages to uproot that ubiquitous turnip, a brave girl who cleverly outwits a forest giant, a courageous soldier who defeats a horrendous giant centipede, and St. Stanislaw, who convinces a wolf that human meat is really not very good to eat. DeSpain has a definite knack for straightforward retellings; his style is clear, clean, and crisp, with each story under six and a half minutes in length. Original music by Jim Wolfe accompanies and enhances the stories. Although the particular country or culture of origin for each story is given, no written sources are cited.

DESPAIN, PLEASANT *Tales to Tell From Around the World, Volume Two;* music by Jim Wolfe. August House, 1995 43 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-418-1 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 2-6

As in Volume One, DeSpain introduces ten tales from around the world in an unaffected, straightforward style. We meet an emperor who decides (in a roundabout way) that the perfect name for his cat is "Cat"; a proud fox who is undone by his own arrogance; and Solomon, who, with the help of a bee, is able to discern a real flower from its imitation. We discover how seven dancing boys end up as seven stars in the sky, how an old gent gets rid of his wart, and how a man pays for the smell of food with the sound of coins. Cleverness and wit (or a lack thereof) is a continuing theme in these stories, which are short, clear, and easily grasped, whether the listener is learning, retelling, or simply enjoying them. As in Volume One (reviewed above), Jim Wolfe's original music adds energy and tonal color to the recording. No specific sources are included, although countries of origin are given.

DETTMAN, DONNA *Peter and Wee & Other Folk Tales.* Depot Recordings, 1996 45 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Donna Dettman Gr. 2-6

Four folktales introduce the listener to tales of cleverness, love, forgiveness, and magic. "Like Meat Loves Salt" tells of a father who rejects the

daughter who says she loves him "like meat loves salt." Years later, old, sick, and not quite right in the head, he recognizes her when, as his hostess, she serves him meat without salt. "The Magic Pot" steals a rich man's stew, butter, and gold for a poor man and his wife; children will enjoy repeating the chant as the pot "itches and twitches and runs out the door and down the road." "The Selkie" is a retelling of the classic story of the shape-shifting seal whose skin is stolen by a fisherman; and in "Peter & Wee," Peter is a third son kept from any inheritance by his two greedy older brothers. Dettman's polished tellings include musical interludes of guitar and harp, and the title story is accompanied by acoustic bass. While no specific sources are given, two countries of origin (Scotland and Sweden) are identified.

Donoval, Nancy *Brave Hearts and Faithful Friends: Tales of Courage and Cleverness from Around the World.* Nancy Donoval, 1996. 49 min. Audio Cassette. $10.00
Dist. by Nancy Donoval * Gr. K-6

Five traditional tales from around the world are gracefully adapted and presented by storyteller Donoval on this pleasingly eclectic tape. From Haiti (and Diane Wolkstein's collection, *The Magic Orange Tree*) comes the story of "Tipingee," whose friends rally to her aid against a wicked Pig Man à la *Spartacus*; from Ethiopia, the story of "Fire on the Mountain," wherein a young man survives a cold night by imagining the warmth of a distant fire. In the Czech "Pig and Bear Go Into Business," Pig and Bear cannot understand why their business is unsuccessful (they are eating up the profits); a Danish tale explains "Why Evergreen Trees Keep Their Leaves"; and the Buddhist Jataka tale of "The Brave Little Parrot and the Eagle's Tears" illustrates that persistence in the face of impossible odds is true bravery. Donoval is an accomplished, polished teller; her selection of tales for this tape is particularly strong, and her delivery is lucid and effective. Detailed source notes are included.

Donoval, Nancy *Cemetery Mary and Other Spirited Tales.* Nancy Donoval, 1996. 54 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Nancy Donoval * Gr. 4-12

Donoval has a knack for personal as well as traditional tales, fine-tuning their structure until they are a prime example of the storyteller's craft. The title story is an original variant of the urban legend of "The Vanishing Hitchhiker," in which a young boy wins a roller-rink costume contest on Halloween and gives a ghost a ride home on his bicycle; Donoval and friend are frightened out of a night's sleep by the

sounds of a porcine slaughter house in "Squeal"; the brave heroine Li Chi slays a deadly serpent in Donoval's adaptation of a traditional Chinese tale; and another brave daughter gives her vampire mother the gift of eternal rest in Jane Yolen's chilling "Mama Gone." Donoval's delivery is clean and her storytelling elegant, with a control over her tales that marks her as a teller to be reckoned with. Source notes for the tales are included.

DONOVAL, NANCY *Changes of Heart: Tales of Laughter, Loss, and Love.* Nancy Donoval, 1992. Approximately 55 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Nancy Donoval — Gr. 6-12

Donoval is an unaffected, fluid storyteller and her content-rich stories are loaded with inherent drama and humor. A fine combination of a half-dozen traditional and personal tales compose this storytelling offering. The Egyptian tale of the destruction of Sekmet is told in a voice laden with dread and portent; Donoval's story of getting the "wrong" fortune from a Brighton Beach fortune teller is full of hilarious one-liners; and her adaptation of the Irish tale about the foolish Morgan finally getting a good set of brains from his beloved wife has tremendous charm. On this live recording, Donoval's audience is obviously appreciative of her pinpoint timing and impeccable delivery, and listeners of this tape will be appreciative as well. Source notes for stories are included.

DONOVAL, NANCY *Mothers and Other Wild Women Vol. 1—Mostly Wild,* told by Nancy Donoval, Beth Horner, and Supe O'Halloran. Nancy Donoval, Beth Horner, and Supe O'Halloran, 1993. 62 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Nancy Donoval — Gr. 9-12

This three-woman show was recorded live, and the audience's roars of approval will surely echo listeners' own. A threesome telling of the traditional "Be Nice" (about a woman, married to an angry man, who desperately wants to ensure a sweet nature for her expected child) is followed by Donoval's hilarious tale of a drama school escapade involving two other actress girlfriends in "Wild in Milwaukee." On Side Two, O'Halloran relates a disastrous business trip with her teenage son in "Good Mom/Bad Mom, or, My Philadelphia Story"; and Beth Horner's "Encounter With a Romance Novel," about an unbelievable plot that triggers an unbelievable but poetically appropriate response, concludes a riotous program. This show can only be described as stand-up storytelling, with each teller revealing her own special brand of humor. Parents should try listening to it with their teenagers, and teenagers

should listen to it alone in order to get the idea that their own lives will some day be the stuff of which stories are made.

DUNCAN, NANCY *The Adventures of Edgar: A Country House Mouse*; by Freeda Swope; music by Marty Magnuson. Baba Yaga & Friends, 1990. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $11.00
Dist. by Story Performances PS-Gr. 3

Six tales of Edgar the Country House Mouse tell of the quixotic misadventures of a young mouse. After a rather gruesome beginning in which he has to chew the tip of his tail off after getting caught in a mousetrap, Edgar learns about raincoats as hiding places and how to avoid a big black snake, acquires a distinctive marking after an encounter with some bleach, and gets drunk by eating the liquor-soaked fruitcake at a Christmas party. Finally, Edgar's life is saved when the teacher at an art studio takes him in as a pet. This tape is old-fashioned in its approach to storytelling and somewhat overproduced, but the orchestral music does add interest to the telling as well as providing an obvious break between stories. Listeners fond of Beverly Cleary's Ralph S. Mouse may give this one a spin.

DUNCAN, NANCY *Coyote*; music by Michael Fitzsimmons. Nancy Duncan, 1995. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $11.00
Dist. by Story Performances Gr. 7-12

This unusual tape is a combination of traditional and family stories in which Duncan puts forth what can only be called a personal vision of Coyote, as animal, trickster figure, and demigod. Opening with the story of a family visit to zoo-dwelling coyotes, Duncan segues into a traditional Dineh story called "Coyote Makes the Way." An authored tale called "Dried Mice" (written by Ursula Le Guin a[illegible]ara Pearson of the Nehalem Tillamook people), about a human child adopted by coyotes, is included, as are the well-known "Coyote Dances with the Stars" and several other tales. The occasional lack of tonal variation demonstrates there is such a thing as being a little too low-key, but Duncan's deceptively quiet delivery ultimately seduces listeners into both her selection of tales and her worldview, in which coyote the animal and Coyote the trickster figure prominently. This window into personal mythology may spark some original myth-making among listeners.

DUNCAN, NANCY K. *Nebraska '49: Pioneer & Family Stories of the Great Westward Migration of 1849*; music by Michael Fitzsimmons and Deborah Greenblatt. Baba Yaga & Friends, 1990. Approximately 55 min.
Audio Cassette $11.00
Dist. by Story Performances
Gr. 4-12

The story of one family's journey from Iowa to Oregon in a covered wagon is movingly related by Duncan. Taking on the role of the wife and mother who is not even sure she really wants to go, Duncan describes in detail the wagon and its contents, life on the trail, and the hardships the pioneers had to undergo. Her attention to detail makes the journey seem very real as the family waits twelve days for their turn on the ferry and the children keep out of trouble by counting the revolutions of the paddlewheel. The death of the older son, Edwin, is especially moving. A lone fiddle and an occasional flute give an appropriate musical background. More of a continuing narrative than a collection of separate stories, this tape would add depth to any study of the westward movement.

EDGECOMB, DIANE *New Age Gawain and the Green Knight*; music by Margot Chamberlain. Wilderwalks Productions, 1995. 46 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-9651669-1-0 $10.00
Dist. by Wilderwalks Productions
Gr. 9-12

On this live recording, Edgecomb and musician accompanist Chamberlain tell an old Arthurian legend, "in which Iron Age men meet New Age agenda," with an irreverent twist and totally contemporary sarcasm. This fast-paced story with strong messages about gender roles features everything from a bungee-jumping men's-conference interloper who offers an ancient challenge to new-age ideas, to a castle populated by three very different women each embodying a different temptation for Gawain. Expressive vocalization and dramatic use of voice and of music maintain listener's interest throughout. This would be a solid addition to high-school English classes as an example of satire and reinterpretation of traditional literature as well as a good demonstration tape for a speech or drama club, because it exemplifies consistency in character voices and provides a fine example of dramatic interpretation.

ELLIS, BRIAN "FOX" *Fun with Fables from Around the World*. Fox Tales International, 1996. 46 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Fox Tales International
Gr. K-6

Ellis' selection of fables has broad appeal and application in both school and public libraries. Stories from Aesop, Tolstoy, and the Buddhist

Jatakas are only a few of the dozen teaching tales represented on this tape; the tellings are interspersed with songs in a variety of languages and with explication by teller Ellis on the sources and inspirations for his tales. This is a slickly produced tape with extensive liner notes, and although Ellis runs the risk of interfering with his own telling through excessive commentary and chit-chat, his selection of stories is quite strong and his voice, both singing and speaking, is emotive and effective.

Ellis, Brian "Fox" *Imagine: Adventures in Nature.* Fox Tales International, 1993 56 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Fox Tales International Gr. 3-8

Ellis combines original and personal storytelling, using a conspiratorial tone as he tells his tales directly to his listeners and engages them in his wilderness learning experiences. The tape insert gives hefty source information as well as a description of story themes and brief suggestions about how to use them in the classroom. The somewhat lengthy stories introduce Ellis' love of nature, engendered by his sojourn as a wilderness camp counselor, and vary from original tales built around aspects of the natural sciences ("The Web" illustrates the food chain and the web of life, while "Walter the Water Molecule" tells about the water cycle) to a traditional Southwest Pueblo Indian tale called "Frog and Locust Make It Rain." The music and songs, ranging from instrumental variations to original takes on traditional songs and chants, are nicely delivered. Teachers and parents looking for a way to capture the interest of the science-shy will make good use of this tape, and young listeners will appreciate Ellis' easy enthusiasm.

Ellis, Brian "Fox" *River Stories I.* Fox Tales International, 1993 55 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Fox Tales International Gr. 4-12

An eclectic juxtaposition of tales results in an effective and unusual storytelling experience in this unique offering. In the opening tale, entitled "The Riverboat as Time Machine," Ellis gives a geological and natural history of the inland waterways, leading into an American Indian creation myth of Grandma Turtle that encourages listener participation. Combining literary tales from Mark Twain with senior citizens' personal remembrances of surviving prairie fires and even anecdotes about Abraham Lincoln, this well-crafted story presenta-

tion is rich with history and invention. Ellis is an expressive, dramatic teller with a personable approach to tape-making that inspires intimacy and confidence. Extensive notes give the sources and background of each tale.

ELLIS, BRIAN "FOX" *River Stories II.* Fox Tales International, 1993. 60 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Fox Tales International Gr. 4-12

Ellis' story selection results in a solid tape with a strong historical bent. Following the theme of traveling up and down the rivers and back and forth through time, Ellis tells some tales adapted from Mark Twain, several traditional (and tall) fish stories, an historical tale of slaves escaping across the Ohio River, and a ghost tale. The tales are filled with visual images and song; Ellis introduces each one, providing information on the story's background and on his interpretation. Some of the introductory material is more distracting than helpful; it's often also superfluous, as much of the information is repeated in the notes. The escaping slave tale "Rowing the Ohio" is followed by Walter Robinson's song about Harriet Tubman, and the two pieces make a powerful impression despite the distracting dialect used in the former. The final tale is an urban myth called "The Ghost with Red Hair," about a mother who returns after death to save her infant child, which, while somewhat off the theme, is a haunting and strong conclusion.

ETH-NOH-TEC (ROBERT KIKUCHI-YNGOJO AND NANCY WANG) *Treasure Bag of Asian Stories.* Eth-Noh-Tec, 1992. Approximately 55 min.
Audio Cassette $12.00
Dist. by Eth-Noh-Tec Creations Gr. K-12

"Stories are living gifts, pass them on," say Eth-Noh-Tec storytellers Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo and Nancy Wang, and they take this advice to heart, for as revealed in the tale "The Story Bag," when stories are not shared they take revenge on the bearer. Excellent timing, sound effects, voice changes and music enhance these tandem tellings of seven lively Asian folk tales. Eth-Noh-Tec's use of traditional Asian instruments—sticks, drums, flutes, and gongs—creates an integrated listening experience with precise rhythms and an apparent physicality that transcends the ear. The stories are primarily humorous, gently pointing out the universality of our many human frailties. The tales on this recording include "The Story Bag" (Korean), "The Drunk and the Monk" and "Ten Thousand Treasure Cave" (Chinese), "Seven Silly Fellows" and "Legend of Kulintang" (Filipino), "Amaterasu, Goddess

of the Sun" and "Tanuki and the Magic Fan" (Japanese). Notes on the tales and a complete listing of the traditional Asian instruments heard on the recording are included.

FOREST, HEATHER *The Animals Could Talk.* August House, 1994
42 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-344-2 $12.95
Dist. by August House * PS-Gr. 4

Forest's original tale-singing gives new life to nineteen of Aesop's fables. The thirsty crow and the pitcher, the fox and the sour grapes, the old man who teaches that a bundle of sticks is stronger than a single stick, a donkey who tries to disguise himself with a lion's skin, and fifteen other tales entertain while they teach. The morals are not overtly given, for Forest prefers that listeners find their own meanings in the stories. The music is catchy and appealing, and Forest's voice is rich and resonant as she artfully combines the spoken word, music, and rhythm into an entrancing listening experience. Lyrics and source notes are included.

FOREST, HEATHER *The Eye of the Beholder.* Yellow Moon Press, 1991
80 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-938756-31-1 $9.95
Dist. by Yellow Moon Press * Gr. 6-12

Forest retells some sophisticated, highly romantic tales dealing with perception or, as the title puts it, "the eye of the beholder." "Beauty and the Beast" is Forest's musical retelling of the familiar de Beaumont tale (with Charles Perrault's "Riquet of the Tuft" thrown in), and Disney it certainly isn't. The power and beauty of the tale remains intact as Forest combines the sung and spoken word in a marvelously involving, lengthy retelling. The Chinese folktale "The Farmer's Horse Ran Off" is a brief story about how misfortune can be a blessing in disguise; Forest's version has humor and style, as does her clever, sensual retelling of the Arthurian legend "The Tale of Dame Ragnel" (sometimes known as "The Loathly Lady"). Ragnel is followed by a retelling of Andersen's "Nightingale," about the Emperor who mistakenly favors a gaudy mechanical bird over a real one. In the closing story, "The Beggar King," a wicked demon teaches Solomon the difference between truth and illusion in an effort to help him become a wiser king. Forest's singing voice is melodic and her speaking voice seductive; her musical accompaniment is expert and lovely, and it never overwhelms the narrative. The pacing is precise, the

retellings elegant, and the selection of tales impeccable. Thoughtful, serious and witty, this is a stylish tape that young adults will relish.

FOREST, HEATHER *Wonder Tales from Around the World.* August House, 1995. 54 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-427-9 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 4-12

Wonder tales are examples of folk stories, handed down generation after generation, that stand the test of time not only because of the universal truths that they contain, but because of the inclusion of magical events and marvels. Heather Forest provides six wonder tales: "The Peddler of Swaffam," despite being ridiculed, follows his dreams; a king learns what is truly worthwhile in "Midas and the Golden Touch"; a story of the seal people of Iceland in "The Sealskin"; "The Contest Between Wisdom and Luck" from eastern Europe; "Talk Talk," the musical story of a talking yam from West Africa; and a haunting Japanese story about "The Boy Who Drew Cats," and how his cats come to his aid when he is in need. Forest effectively combines storytelling and music, sometimes singing parts of the story, sometimes performing introductory tunes, sometimes providing background music with guitar, flute, and other instruments, all of which greatly enhance these accessible retellings. No source notes are included.

FREEMAN, MARA *Celtic Tales of Birds and Beasts*; music by Gerry Smida. Chalice Productions, 1996. 57 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Chalice Productions Gr. 7-12

Freeman's formal, precise presentation of her adaptations of Irish animal tales will appeal to listeners with a strong sense of melodrama as she leads them through tales of quests, transformations, and tragedy. In "The Prince, the Fox, and the Sword of Light," a young prince seeks to break his stepmother's evil spell by capturing a blue falcon; a young man makes friends with a pack of wolves in "The Black Wolf"; and one of the Three Sorrows of Erin is gently recounted in "The Children of Lir." The tape is somewhat overproduced—the underlying harp and pipe music is occasionally distracting, and Freeman's telling, brogue and all, borders on the fulsome, but the inherent drama of the tales and the romance of their origins cannot fail to intrigue listeners. Commentary on the stories is included in the liner notes, but sources are not given.

FREEMAN, MARA *Tales of Love and Transformation*; music by Jerry Smida. Chalice Productions, 1996. 55 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Chalice Productions Gr. 9-12

Four Celtic tales of love and tragedy are presented by storyteller Freeman on this nicely packaged tape. The story selection reveals a predisposition for powerfully romantic tales run through with threads of tragedy, destiny, and poetic language. Adapted from the traditional ballad, the tale of "Tam Lin" tells how brave Janet rescues her lover from the snares of the fairy folk; "The Story of Deirdre" is the heartbreaking tale of a love destined for tragedy as the lovely Deirdre becomes the unwilling cause of her lover's death; in "The Wooing of Etain," an enchanted fairy woman is reborn as a mortal maid, sought across the years by her fairy lover; while in "The Mother of Oisin," the hero Finn marries the beloved of a dark druid, with sad but inevitable results. Freeman is a storyteller of obvious sophistication, with a dramatic, refined delivery, but her limited tonal variations appear to give the same weight to each incident regardless of its inherent drama. The combination of music and sound effects sometimes overwhelms the telling; still, the stories on this tape and Freeman's conscientious delivery will appeal to those with a penchant for romantic destiny. Commentary on each story is included, but source notes are not.

FRONTCZAK, SUSAN MARIE *Stories to Chill Your Bones*. Susan Marie Frontczak, 1994. Approximately 55 min.
Audio Cassette $11.50
Dist. by Susan Marie Frontczak Gr. 6-12

Two literary works provide a worthy challenge for sophisticated listeners. "Goblin Market" by Christina Rossetti is a story-poem written in the late 1800s, which tells of the dangers of mixing with goblin men and eating their food. When young Laura foolishly eats of fairy fruit, she falls under a spell and only the brave efforts of her loving sister, Lizzie, save her. The language of the poem is intricately lovely, and Frontczak's sensual interpretation is dramatic and theatrical. Edgar Allan Poe's well known "Tell-Tale Heart" describes the murder of an old man by a mad man, and how the murderer's arrogance and guilt lead to his downfall as he hears, louder and louder, the beating of the dead man's heart. Frontczak's voice is expressive and evocative, and her selected tales are told with effective dramatic timing and control. English teachers looking for a way to draw modern readers into literature will welcome these visceral interpretations.

GIBSON, ELIZABETH *Unusual Aesop's Fables: Witty Tales of Ancient Wisdom.* E.J.R. Gibson Publishing, 1996. 54 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-9651116-0-1 $9.95
Dist. by EJR Gibson, Baker & Taylor, and Quality Books * PS-Gr. 6

The truth of the old adage "less is more" is demonstrated by this succinctly told collection of brief, lesser-known Aesop's fables. Gibson has taken eight of her favorite fables and adapted them for her own uncluttered style of telling. Included is "Max and His Trusty Axe," wherein Max (the singing woodcutter) drops his axe into the river. The river spirit offers him a silver axe, and then a gold one, but Max refuses what doesn't belong to him and is rewarded for his honesty. Also included is a tale of "The Fashionable Fox," a beauty contest among some foolish birds; "The Courageous King," about a lion king who learns about courage from a frog; and "Henrietta and Penelope," a story of a pig and an eagle and the trouble that a mean-spirited cat causes between them. Gibson possesses a very straightforward, lively style of storytelling. Her voice characterizations and her use of song and rhyme bring the stories to life. Enhanced by guitar vignettes played by Pete Butler between the stories, this collection will be very useful to anyone studying Aesop, fables, or storytelling. Gibson's streamlined yet ebullient adaptations may inspire other storytellers to add Aesop to their own repertoire.

GRAY, RAY *The Storyteller: An Adventure into the World of Fairy Tales*; music by Michelle Mercure. Ray Gray Productions, 1990. 60 min.
Audio Cassette $6.99
Dist. by Ray Gray Gr. K-6

This listening adventure opens with the tale of a grieving king who is relieved by the storytelling of a young maidservant who tells him a story every night. After running out of stories, the girl meets an old woman with a magical stone, the Stoneteller, that endlessly provides new tales. When the woman mysteriously disappears, the girl seeks out the Stoneteller and storyteller Gray invites his listeners to retrace her steps. "Use your imagination and feel yourself rising up, up . . . over snow capped mountains . . . into a dark forest of long ago." Fairy tales are told along the way—a tale of two princesses (one good and one evil), a tale of a one-eyed giant and his dog, and retellings of "Hansel and Gretel" and "The Emperor's New Clothes." The climactic ending to the maidservant's quest has listeners face to face with a fire-breathing dragon, beyond which is the Stoneteller. The frame of the larger story setting within which the other stories are told is effective in giving an overall sense of continuity. Gray's language, delivery and imagery,

coupled with Michelle Mercure's synthesized music and sound effects will enable listeners to imagine themselves right there in the land he has created.

GREENBERG, BONNIE *From the Hearts of the People, Volume I.* Bonnie Greenberg, 1996 64 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Bonnie Greenberg Gr. 6-12

In a clear, warm voice, Greenberg shares two stories of her family and her Jewish tradition, incorporating songs and music into her presentation. Her cousin Zusha is "The Youngest Partisan," who lived through the horrors of the Holocaust. Separated from his parents and protected by a Christian family, the nine-year-old boy hid in a forest, a pigpen, and a haystack before joining the partisans to fight the Nazis. Especially moving is a letter from his twenty-one-year-old aunt, written as she contemplates her own approaching death. "If My Candlesticks Could Talk" is the story of Greenberg's grandparents, who emigrated from Europe first to New York and then to West Virginia, where they raised their children and faced the Ku Klux Klan. Like their candlesticks, brought from Europe, their story is passed through four generations. Greenberg has a gently emotive voice, and this tape will remind listeners that history is lived by real people, and that even an ordinary family has remarkable stories to tell.

HAMILTON, MARY *1000 Ideas and Then Some.* Hidden Spring, 1992 43 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-885556-02-0 $10.00
Dist. by Hidden Spring Gr. 4-12

Hamilton presents a variety of international folktales that, with the possible exception of "Mr. Fox," will be new to most listeners. "1000 Ideas" is a wake-up call for any listener who finds it difficult to make choices or who labors under the delusion that being an "idea person" guarantees success. "None but Timothy Brennan" is Hamilton's version of the Irish tale "The Man Who Had No Story," in which a young traveling boy finally finds a story he can tell; in the Italian "Princess and the Dove," a haughty prince is reminded of his debt to a self-sacrificing princess. The English Bluebeard story of "Mr. Fox" adds a slight chill to Hamilton's story selection, while the Indian "King and His Advisor" reveals that we do not always know what fate has in store for us. The teller's pace is steady and her vocal characterization precise, if occasionally lacking in emotional emphasis. The diverse

selection of stories makes this an easy fit for school and public library collections. The national origins of each story are listed, but source and bibliographic information are not provided.

HAMILTON, MARY *Haunting Tales: Live from Culbertson Mansion.* Hidden Spring, 1996. 54 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-885556-04-7 $10.00
Dist. by Hidden Spring Gr. 6-12

This tape presents familiar ghost stories and ghost-story adaptations from regional sources performed before a live audience. Opening with a version of "Sam'l," a humorous tale about a wandering ghost featuring the ghastly Graveyard Worm, Hamilton captures her audience with her musical voice and vocal characterizations. Her Victorian twist on the enduring motif of the Vanishing Hitchhiker, "The Beaded Bag," is especially enjoyable. Adaptations of the well-known and oft-told "Sop Doll" and "Tailypo" are unique enough to easily hold listeners' interest; less familiar, and more interesting, is Hamilton's "Promises to Keep," the tale of a Civil War soldier who comes back from death to return a wedding ring to his wife. Hamilton's pacing is superlative, and her delivery is rivetingly atmospheric. Complete bibliographic information and source notes are provided for each story.

HAMILTON, MARY *Some Dog and Other Kentucky Wonders.* Hidden Spring, 1992. 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-885556-01-2 $10.00
Dist. by Hidden Spring Gr. 4-8

With a distinct Southern cadence, Hamilton presents Kentucky variants of traditional tales, including "Lazy Jack" and an adaptation of a ghost story, "Stormwalker," by Roberta Mae Brown. Teachers seeking curriculum materials on Kentucky or regional folklore will find this tape helpful especially if used in conjunction with stronger works by Jackie Torrence (*Mountain Jack Tales*), the Folktellers, or other tellers with Appalachian roots such as Elizabeth Ellis and Donald Davis. Young listeners will enjoy "Some Dog," Hamilton's combined-into-one-story adaptation of three regional tales; her imaginative listing of turtle delicacies will inspire more than a few giggles. Hamilton has a smooth delivery and an engaging style, and while the tales tend to come to the point rather laconically, that point is worth the wait. Complete source and bibliographic information is included.

HAMILTON, MARY *Stepping Stones: Stories for Children 4-10.* Hidden Spring, 1992 58 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-885556-03-9 $10.00
Dist. by Hidden Spring PS-Gr. 4

Hamilton presents international folktales along with a literary tale by Bethany Roberts. Preschoolers will enjoy Hamilton's lively telling of "The Bun" with its singing refrain, and listeners of all ages will chant along with "Drakestail's" "Quack! Quack! Quack! I want my money back!" In her adaptation of "The Wishing Star," from *Waiting for Spring Stories* by Bethany Roberts, Hamilton adds explanatory text, and her language is less vivid than Roberts'. Young listeners will still enjoy it, since Hamilton does keep the flavor of the original story, but educators may want to share the music of the text as written. In Hamilton's retelling of "Vasilisa the Beautiful," the characters are clearly drawn, the pacing is involving, and interest is maintained throughout the lengthy telling. Although Hamilton's stated audience is four to ten year-olds, the high end of that age range may find "The Bun" and "Wishing Star" too childish; the Russian Vasilisa, however, is a heroine sure to appeal to all ages. Complete bibliographic information and source notes are included for each tale.

HARLEY, BILL *From the Back of the Bus.* August House Audio, 1995 65 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-441-4 $12.00 (August), $10.00 (Round River)
Dist. by Round River Records and August House Gr. 4-8

Bill Harley recollects his experiences in elementary school in two lengthy personal narratives. His school stories strike universal chords as they illustrate the way kids see the adult inhabitants of their world. The intimidating authority of a tearsome principal comes to bear in "Bottlecaps," in which the narrator makes the mistake of bringing his bottlecap collection to school, whereupon he is required to come up with a list of one hundred uses for such a collection (a task in which he is assisted by friends and strangers alike). In the second story, listeners meet Mr. Anderson, the State of Indiana's "School Bus Driver of the Year." He has only one rule—no yelling—but he does allow the kids to sing, so they try to get his goat by singing the silliest songs they can find. A couple of these songs are included in the story, with Harley accompanying himself on the guitar. Harley's retrospective insights into his school days in Indiana are hilariously relayed through song and story, and listeners of all ages will relate to these tales, which may well prompt them to recall similar experiences of their own.

HARLEY, BILL. *Grownups are Strange.* Round River Records, 1990. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Round River Records Gr. 4-12

Introduced with an original song by Harley ("Grownups Are Strange"), this tape consists of two lengthy stories that could be subtitled "Weird Grownups I Have Known," as Harley tells about his best friend Glenn's eccentric grandmother who had a knack for "fixing people's wagons," and his third-grade teacher, Mrs. Nottingham, who had a knack for celebrating birthdays. In "Grandma vs. The Headless Man," Harley recalls a backyard campout during which he and his friend tell each other ghost stories such as "Tailypo" and "The Golden Arm," but nothing prepares them for a real encounter with Glenn's baseball bat-wielding granny. In "Happy Birthday, Mrs. Nottingham!" Harley tells how a scary teacher taught him about the world through books and reading. The stories are long reminiscences, and it's possible that adult hindsight may be necessary for them to achieve their full effect. Harley has a talent for remembering what it felt like to be a kid, and what was really important during those times, however, and he communicates his memories of feelings and incidents in a manner both humorous and touching.

HARLEY, BILL. *Lunchroom Tales: A Natural History of the Cafetorium.* Round River Productions, 1996. 55 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-878126-19-9 $10.00
Compact Disc ISBN 1-878126-20-2 $15.00
Dist. by Round River Records Gr. 3-8

"How do you get to be Indiana State School Bus Driver of the Year?" Harley asks in his story about Mr. Anderson, his bus driver who never needed to look in the rear-view mirror to find out who was breaking the rules. Harley's enthusiasm is infectious, and he conveys the delicate web of social pressures and goofiness of the later elementary and middle grades with sometimes discomfiting precision. "Happy Birthday, Mrs. Nottingham"(a shorter version than on *Grownups Are Strange*, reviewed above) is the story of an awkward misunderstanding between a class full of kids excited to celebrate their teacher's fiftieth birthday, and the chagrin of their teacher, who is actually only forty-nine. The stories have a chuckle-out-loud humor but often conclude on a surprisingly somber note (for example, "Kevin's Story" is a wistful adult reflection on a missed opportunity for friendship). The upbeat, original songs interspersed between the stories are hummable and memorable, from the heartfelt "We've Been Friends" to a paean to procrastination,

"I'm Gonna Do It Tomorrow." Students and teachers will be on familiar ground as Harley highlights the joys and traumas of life in elementary/middle school.

HARLEY, BILL. *Wacka Wacka Woo & Other Stuff.* Round River Productions and August House, 1995. 54 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-878126-15-6. $10.00 (Round River), ISBN 0-87483-440-6. $12.00 (August House)
Dist. by Round River Records and August House. Gr. 3-6

Harley is an accomplished musician and showman, and he can put a story across on the strength of his personality alone. His original variation of Richard Chase's "Soap, Soap, Soap" and two lengthy original stories are framed with some short traditional and original songs on this humorous offering. "Soap's" main character is a determined, spunky lad who sings his way through the story's catchy pivotal refrains. In "Aunt Edith Meets Tricky," two brothers search frantically for an escaped hamster before their elderly Aunt Edith finds it; in "Tara and the Magic Sack," a wizard's young daughter seizes her opportunity to bring magic and happiness back to her father. "Soap" has the appeal of a traditional tale pulled into the present, complete with street lights and beauty salons, while "Tara" has an active female protagonist seeking her own way. Some judicious trimming would result in more cohesive, effective deliveries—"Tara" especially could benefit from closer adherence to traditional structure and patterns—but the pleasingly melodic refrain and joyous conclusion is worth the wait. Kids will stay with the likeable Harley until the end, even if impatient grown-ups wish he'd get to the point just a *little* sooner.

HARLEY, BILL. *Who Made This Mess?;* music by Bill Harley and The Troublemakers. A&M Video, 1992. 55 min.
Videocassette ISBN 83603-8414-3. $15.00
Dist. by A&M Video. Gr. K-6

With the production values of a good music video, this is an attention-grabber from the very first opening images. Varied camera work, a live audience of participating parents and kids, and Harley's funny, relaxed patter creates a close-to-being-there experience. All songs are written by Harley (except for one song by Harry Belafonte) and sung in his appealing, friendly voice. This is a tape with a tremendous amount of middle-school child-appeal—"You're in Trouble" is a paean to whining, and "Cool in School" (sung in four-part harmony with the backup band in sunglasses à la Huey Lewis and the News) asks the age-old question, "Can anybody tell me what's cool?"—and will be great for large group viewing. The story of "Joey and Chloe and the Swamp Monsters" is a

crowd pleaser, as twins Joey and Chloe get expensive new sneakers, treat them carelessly, and have to go fetch them from the gloomy swamp. The camera alternates between showing the teller and showing the audience, with dramatic lighting and musical sound effects and accompaniment to enhance the suspense. The audience spontaneously joins in, and while there are a few strange little black-and-white cutaways that interrupt the flow of an otherwise fluid tape, that's a minor quibble. Harley closes with a lyrical nighttime song, "The Moon and Me," and a rhythm and blues environmental message song, "Who Made This Mess?," to make this a well-rounded, satisfying music and storytelling experience.

HAVEN, KENDALL *Fathers and Sons*; music by Christopher Hedge. Story Street, 1991 60 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by HavenBerg Productions Gr. 9-12

Three original semi-autobiographical stories link Haven's childhood experiences with his imagined experiences as a father. "The Sawhorse Elk" opens on a winter night with six-year-old Kendall accompanying his father to the woods to observe a majestic lone elk standing in the snow. Many years later, Haven finds the task of recreating the experience for his own son no easy feat, especially when the papier-mâché head of the elk falls off in the rain. "The Climbing Tree" illustrates that point in time when adults no longer see the wonders of the world as children do, instead becoming more obsessed with mundane duties such as keeping the lawn free of weeds; when the adult Haven climbs a tree to rediscover childlike wonder, his son bemusedly inquires what his dad is doing in the tree. "Baseball Magic" is a story about glory, humiliation, and the discovery that victory and defeat are relative terms. Homegrown stories with a small-town feel, these are easy to relate to, especially for any adult who has or knows a child. Occasional and tasteful background music and sound effects are provided by Christopher Hedge.

HENEGAR, STEVE *Moving Stories*. Steve Henegar, 1991 45 min.
Audio Cassette $11.50
Dist. by Steve Henegar * Gr. 6-12

A laconic, dry delivery adds humor to a unique set of stories clustered around the themes of leave-taking and family migration. Henegar's personal, family, and traditional stories on this rich motif are expertly delivered, with precision timing and remarkably apt expression. From his great-great etc. grandmother Martha's nontraditional courting of a passing stranger who wound up as great-great etc. grandfather George,

to a progressively more exaggerated fish story about a catfish named Old Dan, to the bridling of a recalcitrant mule in "Bridling Old Red," Henegar's skillful choice of words and his tight control over his material result in an unusually well-crafted presentation of personal tales. The hilarity highlight of the concert may well be the Ozark tall tale "Old Walleyes," in which Henegar describes a man's unwitting encounter with the notorious monster. Recorded live at the Broach Theater in Greensboro, N.C., this is a prime example of a melding of family and traditional stories that is both witty and well told.

Holt, David *The Hogaphone & Other Stories.* High Windy Video, 1991. 30 min.
Videocassette ISBN 0-942303-40-7 $15.98
Dist. by High Windy Video Gr. 6-12

David Holt combines his expert banjo playing with direct and unfancified storytelling on this well-produced video. Five tales (four from Holt's experiences living in the North Carolina mountains and one traditional tale) make up a tape that is eminently suitable for all ages. Humor and music underscore each tale as Holt tells about "The First Motorcycle in Black Mountain, North Carolina"; how summers in Texas and his grandmother's old fan started him on his musical career in "The Hambone Fan"; the way Granny saved Uncle Ike from a bear by playing music through "The Hogaphone"; how a brother, sister, and their three dogs outsmart an evil witch in "Barney McCabe"; and when David and his brother mistook "The Water Tower" for a radio tower. There is no gratuitously artsy camera work here—just strong audio, simple visuals, and a master storyteller telling stories to the camera and the listeners. It's almost like having him home for a visit.

Holt, David *Mostly Ghostly Stories*; music by David Holt. High Windy Audio, 1995. 57 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-942303-09-1 $9.98
Dist. by High Windy Audio Gr. 4-12

Combining historical events, an American Indian vision quest, and a panoply of jealous and vengeful ghosts, storyteller Holt not only gives listeners a rousing good time, he makes them wonder. Three of the stories are based upon historical events: "The Titanic" recounts the memories of one of the 700 survivors of that terrible shipwreck; "Scalped Alive" is the story of a pioneer in Texas who survives an Indian attack; and "Fancy," set against the backdrop of the Gatesville, Texas, flood, tells the story of a murderous husband's final embrace of his dead wife. The remaining three tales are traditional: "The Jealous Bones of Aaron Kelly" can't outdance a courting musician's fiddle, while in "The Blood

Drawing Ghost" a clever girl named Kate tricks a ghoulish ghost with a gruesome hunger. "The Magic Lake" is a Cherokee tale about a warrior who discovers a lake that provides sanctuary for animals. Holt's expert storytelling is combined with song and music, including harmonica, guitar, and bones accompaniment, which creates a listening experience with just enough shivers and chills to keep everybody happy.

HOLT, DAVID AND BILL MOONEY *Why the Dog Chases the Cat: Great Animal Stories*; music by David Holt and Bill Mooney. High Windy Audio, 1994. 40 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-942303-07-5 $9.98
Dist. by High Windy Audio * All ages

Storytellers David Holt and Bill Mooney combine their talents to delight and inform with tales rich in American folk wisdom. Children who have pondered eternal questions—why dogs chase cats, why cats lick their paws after they eat, and why you never see a rabbit playing a banjo—will find answers in these traditional tales. Mr. Rabbit, with his sometimes twisted but never boring advice, is the instrument of instruction in four of the six tales: in "Is It Deep Enough?" Rabbit helps Opossum catch frogs for his family's dinner; "The Whirlwind" relates how Rabbit tricks greedy Lion away from a community well; "Why You Never Hear Rabbit Play Banjo" tells how Rabbit tricks Cougar to win Ms. Fox's hand; and in "Trouble, or, How the Alligator Got Its Hide," Rabbit teaches the Alligators to "never trouble trouble until trouble troubles you." "Why the Dog Chases the Cat" and "Why the Cat Washes Its Paws Before It Eats" complete this lively selection of tales. Holt and Mooney tell in finely tuned and finely timed tandem, moving in and out of character and interspersing the narrative with song, music, and sound effects to create "a racket and a rhythm no animal has ever heard before"—with the exception of children, who will recognize these tales immediately as pure listening pleasure.

HORNER, BETH *Encounter with a Romance Novel: Heroines In Everyday Life*. Beth Horner, 1993. 58 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Beth Horner * Gr. 7-12

The cover of *Encounter With a Romance Novel* displays storyteller Horner as a romance heroine, dressed in red and clasped in the arms of a typical romance-novel Romeo, which provides a foretaste of the joy and humor that listeners will find on this tape. Horner's two songs and four stories all feature strong female characters. "The Witch Song" contradicts the common stereotype of witches as evil; "My Childhood Life Jacket" and "Encounter With a Romance Novel" are personal narratives,

the first telling how she learned to swim thanks to (or in spite of) a loathsome life jacket, and the second a hilarious recap of the escalating plot of a romance novel that she read on vacation. "The Young Woman of Vietnam" relates how a young woman outwits her husband in order to unite her family; and "The Skull," adapted from the traditional story "The Girl and the Castle," is the musical tale of a young girl whose courage saves the soul of a victimized woman and wins her a home. Finally, "Generations," beautifully sung by Peg Lehman, tells of the strong ties between mothers and daughters. The stories were recorded in front of a live audience, and Horner's timing and delivery are so moving and funny that her performance is akin to great stand-up comedy.

Irvine, Alan *Midnight Visions.* Alan Irvine, 1993. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00 + $2.00 S&H
Dist. by Alan Irvine Gr. 7-12

Irvine's clear diction and mellow voice is eminently suited to these understated, creepily original takes on traditional tales and urban legends. The opening story, a version of "The Vanishing Hitchhiker," has unexpected punch with its touchingly heartfelt conclusion, in which a young woman, the hitchhiker of the title, sends a message of hope to her elderly mother. "Bartlett's Tale," an original story set in an Old West ghost town, rings with the sound of ghostly revelry and revenge. The concluding story on Side One is entitled "I've Got the Keys" (a variant of the urban parking legend "The Hook"), and its unsettling foregone conclusion is bound to make listeners' skin creep. Side Two is an unusual "spooky story" entry—it is Irvine's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* ("a classic tale of supernatural forces, bloodsoaked ambition, and unmitigated horror") dramatically declaimed and delivered, with enough of the Bard's language intact to give a taste of the original. Irvine delivers a strong sense of underlying horror in each of these tales, and his effective delivery will make this an oft-listened-to favorite, especially with junior-high and high-school students.

KC & Company (Nancy McQuillan, Thomas Hurner, Rory McNeil, et al.) *You're Invited to a Halloween Party: Halloween Songs and Stories with KC & Company*; music by Ken Frawley, Clare Carnegie, Georgia Frawley, et al. Songbook Publishing, 1995. 41 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-887120-00-9 $9.95 (includes booklet)
Dist. by KC & Company PS-Gr. 4

Six songs, three stories (two original), and one story-poem with a musical chorus compose this kid-pleasing tape for Halloween. "Trick or Treat" is the story of one little girl's encounter with a haunted house; "Hairy Toe" tells of another girl's discovery of a renegade toe and the

creature that comes after it. "We Have No Ghost" is one Scottish family's sad lament, a situation that is rectified by a ghost who plays the pipes—badly; and "Nathaniel Blood" is a new version of the familiar tale of the boy who dares to stick a pocketknife into a grave but accidently drives it through his own jacket. The music is rock 'n' roll lively and lyrics are given for the songs. Sound effects and bagpipes add to the Halloween ambience.

KEDING, DAN *Dragons, Giants, and the Devil's Hide.* Turtle Creek Recordings, 1992. 60 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Dan Keding

* Gr. 3-8

These are Keding's adaptations of traditional tales in which good wins the battle with evil—not through muscle, but through cleverness and wit. In the Finnish "Erkki and the Devil's Hide," a boy who never loses his temper makes a pact with the devil but outwits him again and again, until finally the evil one loses his temper and the bargain. The Scottish tale of "The Brownie" tells of Aiken Drum, of popular children's-song fame. Brownies work only for love, not money, but poor Aiken is betrayed when a wicked boy tries to pay him off. "Sir Robert and the Longwitton Dragon" is a classic knight vs. dragon story in which Sir Robert, on his very first quest as a knight, rescues a well of magical waters by outwitting the dragon who guards it. In the Scandinavian tale "The Wizard and the Golden Thread," an evil wizard who turns people to stone is tricked by a young woman who forces him to set his victims free. Lastly, in the German "The Giant's Three Golden Hairs," a wicked king is bested by the commoner who is destined to marry his daughter, after the poor but heroic man collects three hairs from the dreaded giant of the north. Keding's straightforward style of telling, coupled with his excellent ability to adapt and embellish traditional tales, makes this a truly fine sampler of storytelling and folklore.

KEDING, DAN *The Large Mouth Frog.* Turtle Creek Recordings, 1995. 30 min.
Videocassette $15.00
Dist. by Dan Keding

PS-Gr. 4

This is another stand-and-deliver storytelling videotape, without any fancy notions about camera work or production getting between the viewer and the stories. Keding's traditional story selections range from the humorous to the thoughtful, from the Appalachian "Jack and the Haunted House" to the urban legend turned tall tale "The Large Mouthed Frog"; from the teaching tale of "Leopard, Squirrel and Old Man Goat" to the story-songs "Froggie Went A-Courtin'" and "Old

Blue." Keding has a deep, almost mesmerizing speaking voice, and his singing voice is just as riveting. A long-time regular on the folk-music circuit, he accompanies himself on the guitar and plays the spoons; at the conclusion of the tape, he gives a lesson in spoon playing and shows viewers up close and personal how to make that large-mouthed frog come to life in their own two hands. While a few changes of scene and slightly more variety in the camera angles would have made this less visually monotonous, viewers will not be able to deny the strength and presence of these stories and this storyteller.

KEDING, DAN *Promises Kept, Promises Broken.* Turtle Creek Recordings, 1995. 53 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Dan Keding
* Gr. 6-12

The theme of this collection of stories and ballads is apparent from the title: each compelling piece deals with the power of giving one's word or committing oneself to a course of action, whether to an individual, a community, or an idea. Timeless traditional pieces and a powerful original story offer listeners the opportunity to evaluate the importance of a promise. Keding's vibrant conversational style and intimacy of tone make the tales all the more involving and personal. Highlights include "The Banjo Player of Franceville," a well-crafted, spooky adaptation of "The Pied Piper of Hamlin"; "The Letter," a poignant, romantic Civil War ghost story in which a Union soldier delivers a Confederate captain's last letter; and "Willy's Lady," a riveting, ballad-based tale about a wicked queen finally brought to justice by her own son. Keding's telling voice has great authority, and his singing voice is magnificent. Brief but useful notes complete an outstanding package that is both well-executed and thought-provoking.

KEDING, DAN *South Side Stories.* Turtle Creek Recordings, 1993. Approximately 55 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Dan Keding
Gr. 7-12

In Keding's recollections of growing up in an ethnic neighborhood of Chicago, listeners meet a developmentally disabled teen who softens the hearts of his grade-school tormentors, a mother who finds her voice when her child is led away in handcuffs, and a grandmother whose memory is stolen by age. Pathos and sentiment are interwoven with lighter memories of grandmotherly feistiness, misunderstandings during a Catholic confession, and a remembered folktale. Keding's conversational style is easy to listen to, but the restrained moderation does give each of the stories a tonal sameness. The story selection is slightly

uneven—"The Gypsy Wagon," in which neighborhood gypsies change from a horse-drawn cart to a Ford flat-bed truck, is a nostalgia piece that may fail to connect with youngsters. Still, this has elements—humor, drama, familial devotion—that will appeal to older listeners, especially in classrooms or homes where personal stories are welcome and enjoyed.

KEDING, DAN *Stories from the Other Side*; music by Dan Keding and Bill Rintz. Turtle Creek Recordings, 1990. 58 min.
Audio Cassette $9.00
Dist. by Dan Keding
* Gr. 4-12

A collection of ghost tales from around the world, this tape includes the moving French tale of "Marie Yvonne and Her Shroud," in which a dead woman returns to right the wrong of her unfulfilling burial and to demand a proper shroud. "The Dancing Fiddle" (which includes hauntingly beautiful fiddle music by Bill Rintz) comes from Scotland and tells of a fiddle with a spirit all its own. In the Irish "Tieg O'Kane and the Corpse," a spoiled young man gets his just due when he's left responsible for the burial of a corpse by a band of rogue little people. "The Great Silkie" is an eerie ballad, dramatically and simply sung *a cappella*, that tells of a selkie (a seal) who predicts the death of his son. "Mr. Fox," an English Bluebeard story, is presented in a rapid, matter-of-fact way, appropriately dramatizing the gruesome nature of this story of an eighteenth-century serial killer. The ballad of "The House Carpenter" is the story of a woman who gives up her family for a demon lover only to live to regret it. "Martin and the Snakes," which also features fiddle music, tells of a snake charmer who ends up outcharmed by the listening reptiles. Keding's telling and singing voice resonates with authority, and it is remarkably well-suited to this choice of material. This is a tasteful and varied group of supernatural tales, and Keding's storytelling is bound to leave listeners with a truly satisfying, spine-tingling experience. Source notes are included.

KLEIN, SUSAN *Old Standbys*. Susan Klein, 1994. 56 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Susan Klein
PS-Gr. 2

It's hard to go wrong with traditional standards like "The Little Red Hen" or "The Three Bears," but it can also be tough to make a collection of such standbys stand out. Susan Klein manages the task with an intimate, reassuring delivery and adaptations that are comfortably traditional while still incorporating unique touches of imagery, emotion, and language that make each story the teller's own. Klein's deep, sensual voice contributes tremendously to the tape's success, wrapping itself

around the words and providing a rich contrast to her matter-of-fact, no-nonsense delivery. The stories, which also include "Rumpelstiltskin," "Little Red Riding Hood," and "The Fox and the Crow," are interspersed with nursery rhymes such as "Pease Porridge Hot" and "This Little Piggy." Klein's pacing is occasionally uneven (the rhymes are a tad fast and a little more breathing room between stories would be helpful) but this is a faithful workhorse for any storytelling collection, the kind of workhorse with just enough extra spark to win the Derby. No source notes are included.

KLEIN, SUSAN *Through a Ruby Window: A Martha's Vineyard Childhood.* Susan Klein, 1993. 110 min.
2 Audio Cassettes. $18.00
Dist. by Susan Klein Gr. 9-12

These personal narratives about growing up in a small community on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts, contain humor and wisdom gently imparted. Included in Klein's tales are "Aunt Fanny," about her eccentric German aunt who taught her niece to brave East Coast summer thunderstorms; "A Day at the Beach," wherein a large group of kids and parents spend a day at the beach, jumping off the pier, catching ocean food, and enjoying each other's company; "Beach Plum Jam," the making of which involves the teller's mother getting stuck in the beach plum trees; "Packages Home," about her German mother's way of staying in touch with her family; and "On the Wing," experiences with her childhood friend, David. The stories are recorded in front of a live audience who clearly have a keen understanding and appreciation of Klein's experiences. Klein's reminiscences about her childhood capture the essence of life in a small beachside town in the '50s and '60s, before the area became popular with tourists, when it was a very safe and tight-knit community. The stories are well told, the audience is lively and responsive, and the subject matter is often poignant.

KLINGLER, ANGELA CAY *Furre Tales: Folktales, Fables & Fairytales Containing the Wit & Wisdom of the Ages for All Ages.* Angela Cay Klingler, 1996. 45 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-9650232-1-4. $10.00
Dist. by Angela Cay Klingler PS-Gr. 6

Six traditional stories from as many countries are gathered together on this lighthearted tape. The humorous "Turtle on a Stick," from India, reveals the origin of the turtle's cracked shell; "The Oak & the Linden," based on Greek myth, tells of the simple goodness and generosity of two old people who amuse a god and are rewarded. A full scale war erupts from harsh words and "A Drop of Honey," in the story of the

same name from Asia; a master storyteller reveals how he always has the perfect story to tell in "The Archer," based on a Jewish folktale. Klingler also includes two tales from the Grimm Brothers: her hilarious version of "The Three Spinners" tells how a young woman manages to avoid the dreaded task of spinning after marrying the king, and "The Golden Key" entices listeners to provide their own magic. Recorded sound effects sometimes enhance and very occasionally distract from the telling, and other than "tales from the Brothers Grimm," no specific sources are given.

KRUSE, JYM *Stories from the Four Corners of the World.* Jym Kruse, 1996. 58 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Jym Kruse Gr. K-6

Well-developed adaptations of traditional tales from around the world are served up in an inviting style appropriate for a wide range of listeners in this live recording. The stories are unusual, offering more than the typical folktale fare, and the inclusion of individual running times for each will be useful to teachers planning their classroom schedules. Kruse has a mellow voice and an accessible style that draws listeners in, and he offers a child-pleasing variety of sound effects and characterizations. Seven of the eight tales have humor as the focal point, from the well-known fable about the duel between "The Wind and Sun," to the Welsh tale of "The Slop Bucket," to the Mexican tale of "The Chile Patch." The one tale that departs from the humorous bent of the others is the Japanese tale "The Sparrow" (about a woman who cares for a sparrow with a broken wing), which is delivered with an inherent sweetness that is touching and effective. Kruse invites audience participation, and while his exaggerated vocal prompts are occasionally distracting, his audience of elementary school children are happy to oblige. No source information is included beyond each story's country of origin.

LAWRENCE, MARGARET *Panchatantra: Stories From India.* Margaret Lawrence, 1993. 58 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Margaret Lawrence Gr. 3-8

The legend of the Panchatantra is that a certain king wanted his three sons to learn the "wise conduct of life." When they showed no interest in education, he hired the Vishnusharman, a Brahman, to teach them, and the teacher had them memorize the eighty-seven stories of the Panchatantra. These folk stories, which have been handed down in many languages throughout Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, teach lessons about life through various characters, particularly talking animals.

Included in this nine-tale collection is "The Mouse Maid," the tale of a young mouse whose father searches far and wide for a suitable husband for her, only to find that the mouse is mightier than prospective spouses such as the sun, the clouds, the wind, or the mountain. Also included is "The Monkey and the Crocodile," one of the best-known of these tales, in which a crafty monkey tricks a greedy crocodile into letting him go. Adapted from Arthur W. Ryder's translation of the Panchatantra, these versions could be rather dry, but Lawrence embellishes them by varying her voice to differentiate between the characters. This is a straightforward telling of traditional tales that provides a window into a rarely encountered collection.

LEVITT, MARC JOEL. *Johnny Appleseed: Gentle Hero.* August House, 1997. 45 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-476-8. $12.00
Dist. by August House. * PS-Gr. 4

We know that John Chapman, a.k.a. Johnny Appleseed, wandered for forty years across Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Indiana, planting apple orchards and food for thought wherever he went. The story of this extraordinary man comes to life on this tape as Levitt reveals the real history and the folk legend about this American hero. In Levitt's story, Johnny's traits—understanding and nurturing nature, valuing friendship, solving problems by peaceful means—won him admiration and respect wherever he went. Much of the story is told in dialogue between Johnny Appleseed and the people he comes to know, and Levitt imparts individuality to the character voices. The narrative is greatly enhanced by pipe and drum music (with fiddle, banjo, and guitar) and a chorus of children who interject verses of the song "Oh the Glorious Apple" between key parts. This presentation can be enjoyed by all ages and will be especially useful for anyone teaching a unit about pioneer days, folk heroes, or environmental respect. No source notes are given.

LEVITT, MARC JOEL. *Tales of an October Moon.* August House, 1992. 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-209-8. $12.00
Dist. by August House. Gr. 6-12

Four eerie stories written and performed by Levitt provide a haunting program. "The Little Skeleton Girl" tells of the Tucker family, who have a ghostly reunion when their coffins are unearthed during a storm, and of one little ghost girl who finds herself out on the street during Halloween night. "The Scituate Reservoir" is built to provide water for Providence, Rhode Island, but seven little villages have to be flooded to make the reservoir. An old doctor lays a curse on the builder, and soon

stories begin to spread of train whistles and lights from below the water. "The Old Man of the Stone Wall" teaches young Kevin how to build stone walls, but somehow the mysterious man is never visible when Kevin's family and friends want to see him. Years later, when a builder wants to tear down the stone walls to build a new shopping mall, supernatural events convince the townspeople that the walls are not to be disturbed. "The Purple Bishop" was a devil worshipper, and on a Halloween night eighty years ago, four curious children accidentally burned down his church and the bishop with it. That night, the children disappeared, leaving only their shoes behind, and every twenty years since, four children have come to the same fate. Complex and well-crafted, the stories are enhanced by Levitt's haunting voice and calm and quiet delivery. Numerous sound effects add to the chilling atmosphere.

LIEBERMAN, SYD *Joseph the Tailor and Other Jewish Stories*; music by Jeffrey Klepper and Deena Copeland. August House, 1995. 48 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-426-0. $12.00
Dist. by August House * Gr. K-12

This collection of a dozen well-known Jewish tales is outstanding in every respect. A generous sense of humor that ranges from the touching to the slapstick pervades these stories, but at their heart is a practical, resourceful wisdom that is equally engaging. Lieberman has a particular knack for portraying the unlikely and often self-deprecating hero featured in narratives such as "The Debate in Sign Language" or "The Wise Shoemaker of Studena," in part because of his impeccable comic timing and in part because of his ability to relate a moral without a hint of didacticism. His clearly established and enthusiastic relationship with the recording's live audience never excludes or distracts but instead makes audiotape listeners feel like one of the crowd—even when he invites audience participation, as he does in "Elijah and the Poor Man" or "The Noisy House." Top this off with the rich, clear language and vigorous pacing of his retellings, as well as lively flute and guitar interludes, and you'll see that while "Joseph the Tailor," "David and Goliath," "The Two Brothers," and "The Noisy House" may be oft-told tales, they are not often told like this. Minimal source notes are included.

LIEBERMAN, SYD *The Tell-Tale Heart and Other Terrifying Tales*; music by Howard Levy. August House, 1995. 51 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-430-9. $12.00
Dist. by August House * Gr. 6-12

Lieberman adapts literary tales for oral storytelling and makes old tales new in this intensely paced and delivered "tape of horrors." The six

tales are all from literary sources: three from Poe (the title story, "Hop-Frog," and "The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar"), one from Bierce ("An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"), one from Chaucer ("The Pardoner's Tale"), and a particularly well-crafted adaptation of the defeat of Grendel from the first portion of *Beowulf*. Original music highlighting the appropriate mood or era introduces and concludes each story, creating a nicely finished effect. Lieberman breathes new life into oft-studied literary relics, lifting them from dusty textbook pages and giving them an immediate, evocative voice. A master of the controlled phrase and the sharply delineated pause, Lieberman uses both techniques to tremendous effect on this storytelling offering. With elegant pacing and superb timing, he delivers horrors that will chill listeners, with just enough intimate emphasis on the excruciatingly gory details to create the eerie impression of a first-hand account.

LIPKE, BARBARA *Tales from the Vineyard.* Barbara Lipke, 1995. 52 min. Audio Cassette. $10.00
Dist. by Barbara Lipke — Gr. 9-12

Three stories, two original and one literary, are set on Martha's Vineyard. "An Unusual House" tells the long history of the storyteller's home on the Vineyard and of the mysterious ghost that inhabits the house. "Little Things" bother people, and two men sharing a cod-fishing shack are bothered indeed when a dangerous storm hits the area and one man is found dead and the other's fate remains a mystery. "Ephraim and the *Liza Jane*," written by Gale Huntington, tells the story of a race between an old coasting schooner and a newer, sleeker racing yacht. After a slow beginning, the story comes to an exciting climax in which the *Liza Jane* proves her worthiness despite her age. Lipke tells her stories with quiet charm, using vivid language and gentle expression to convey the tales' vibrant images.

LIPMAN, DOUG *Coaching Storytellers: A Demonstration Workshop for All Those Who Use Oral Communication.* Doug Lipman, 1993. 85 min. Videocassette. $39.95 + $2.75 S&H
Dist. by Enchanters Press — Professional

On this how-to tape, Lipman speaks forthrightly to the viewer about how to teach/nurture storytelling and storytellers. The tape is divided into main principles: believe the teller will succeed; tell the student when s/he is doing well; keep the teller in charge of the goals. Lipman looks directly into the camera, which results in a rather stiff delivery, but his presentation is sincere and natural, if pedagogic. He teaches by example, using actual storytellers being coached in choreographed situations. There is a tremendous amount of content in the examples given

for each point, and the main points are repeated as text inserts between the action shots for note-taking and reinforcement. Although the set is stark and the colors cold, the production values are high, and the camera angles and content shots change often enough to keep the viewer involved. The musical underscoring and background whistling gets a bit tedious, but Lipman's delivery is earnest and deliberate. This is a good view of the process of constucting and deconstructing a story for telling—teachers (or coaches) of storytelling will find many techniques that can easily be utilized in a classroom or coaching situation. If you are going to be giving critical feedback to a storyteller, or even if you are trying to self-critique, this tape is a substantial beginning. To get a good handle on all that Lipman is trying to communicate on this videotape, take a look at his book *The Storytelling Coach*.

LIPMAN, DOUG *Hopping Freights: A Wild '60s Adventure.* Yellow Moon Press, 1990. 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-938756-30-3 $9.95
Dist. by Doug Lipman and Yellow Moon Press Gr. 9-12

When student deferments for the Vietnam War draft end, Lipman decides to spend what may be his last pre-military summer traveling to New York City and then on to Germany. He and his friend Eddie strike out for adventure by road and rail, meeting some of life's unusual characters and having several near-death experiences along the way. Personal-memory stories are sometimes not emotionally involving enough to connect with every listener, but Lipman overcomes this drawback, especially in "The Light Brigade," which threads together a traditional anecdote, Lipman's course of action when student deferments end, and his father's own World War II experiences. Listeners nostalgic for the wanderlust of youth, wrestling with memories of the 1960s, or coming to terms with their own father-son relationships will be intrigued by Lipman's odyssey. This well-crafted tape includes a guitar soundtrack (apparently performed by Lipman, who is a musician as well as storyteller) to establish the storybreaks.

LIPMAN, DOUG *Now We Are Free*; music by Doug Lipman, Derek Burrows, et al. Enchanters Press, 1992. 58 min.
Audio Cassette $9.95
Dist. by Enchanters Press * PS Gr. 4

Lipman tells the story of Passover in seven interlocking tales. His strong, deep voice, excellent sense of timing, and well-placed songs make the story of Moses and the Hebrew flight through the desert come alive. In "Miriam's Song" we marvel at the wisdom and courage of seven-year-old Miriam, who refuses to let her family be divided by a Pharoah's

murderous decree; in "What Will Happen to Us Next?" we sympathize with Moses, who leads 600,000 grumbling Jews to freedom, even as we acknowledge that freedom is frightening to a slave who "can complain about things but can't fix anything." A children's chorus accompanies many of Lipman's songs, and at the end of the tape he asks these children to describe what freedom means to them and to imagine what the perfect Jerusalem would be like. This will expand and enhance any library's holiday collection and any family's listening library.

Lipman, Doug *One Little Candle: Participation Stories & Songs for Hanukkah*; music by Doug Lipman. Enchanters Press, 1990. 54 min. Audio Cassette $9.95
Dist. by Enchanters Press PS-Gr. 4

Lipman celebrates the miracle of Hanukkah in six stories and songs. In the tale "I Want to Spread the Word," one small candle thwarts a demon and spreads the word that the Jews have won back their temple from King Antiochus; in "Hanukkah Smiles," the generosity of one little girl starts a chain reaction of helpfulness that ends with the craftsmen in her village rebuilding the school. Upbeat and full of repetition, Lipman's songs invite audience participation. The themes of light overcoming darkness and the renewal of the Jewish culture are presented in age-appropriate terms. This tape will be especially appreciated during the Hanukkah season by Jewish families with young children.

Lloyd, Angela *The Story of Thorn Rosa (Sleeping Beauty).* Chip Taylor Communications, 1995. 15 min.
Video Cassette $29.99
Dist. by Chip Taylor Communications Gr. K-3

Lloyd weaves this story from an old circle song with ease, interspersing songs and touches of wry adult humor. She uses her voice to optimal effect, filling the favorite story with new vigor, and the video closeups convey the full impact of her joyous smile. Her short introduction of the autoharp creates a comfortable familiarity with both her and her instrument.

McBride-Smith, Barbara *Beauties and Beasties.* Pandora Productions, 1993. 48 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Pandora Productions Gr. 4-12

This four-tale tape of multicultural stories for children includes "Bellerophon and Pegasus," a Texas-style version of the classic Greek myth; "Seven Monsters," in which the title creatures spend so much

time arguing with each other they can never catch their prey; "The Wolf and the Seven Kids," a Grimm Brothers' tale in which a big bad wolf is foiled by the mother of the seven billy-goat kids; and "Clever Leonora," the story of a wise woman who teaches an ill-advised king a lesson or two about the value of a diverse kingdom. Oklahoman McBride Smith uses her Southwestern twang as a tool for adding effect and drama to her stories. "Clever Leonora" is the gem of this collection—it's McBride-Smith's most straightforward performance on the tape and a beautiful rendition of a wonderful story. Detailed source notes are included.

MCBRIDE-SMITH, BARBARA *Yoga Tales and Tunes*; music arranged and performed by Jed Butler. Barbara McBride Smith, 1991. 51 min.
Audio Cassette $12.00
Dist. by Barbara McBride-Smith Gr. 9-12

McBride-Smith takes classical mythology and turns it on its ear with her cheerfully irreverent retellings of the "Judgment of Paris," the story of what happened to Midas after the golden touch ("Pan and Midas"), the tragedy of Orpheus and Eurydice ("Orpheus"), and the death of Ajax ("Ajax"). The live audience chuckles enthusiastically at McBride-Smith's delivery of classical tales in an Oklahoma twang, and the witty interjections of musical measures (including themes from *Dragnet*, Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus," and *The Godfather*) provoke well-deserved laughter. The stories are written by Dale Maxwell and adapted for telling by McBride-Smith, and their collaboration has resulted in versions that, once heard, will ensure listeners never look at Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* quite the same way again. Wit, humor, and innuendo do a cheerful dance in these tales and may well inspire some creative writing in the classroom or library.

MARA *Seeing with My Ears: Songs and Stories*; music by Mara, Richard Karst, Wade Peterson, et al. Mara, 1995. 44 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00 + $1.50 S&H
Dist. by Storysong Productions * PS-Gr. 4

The stories and songs on this recording are delightful and entertaining child pleasers. Mara's blend of language, sound effects, and music create memorable rhythms, refrains, and characters as she adapts traditional tales like "Spider's Head," an African Anansi story; "Rabbit Run," a Buddhist "Henny Penny"; and "The Seamstress," based on a Yiddish folksong (a variant of Nancy Schimmel's well-known retelling, "Just Enough to Make a Story"). The songs ("Rainbow Round Me," "Ain't No Bugs on Me," and "Seeing with My Ears") have catchy

melody lines that will inspire children to sing along, and, like Anansi in "Spider's Head," they may find themselves unable to stop. Mara's vocals are clear and strong, and her timing is excellent—she never misses a beat, and her listeners won't either. This is a high-quality recording consciously designed to create a joyful experience for young listeners.

MAY, JIM *The Farm on Nippersink Creek: Stories From a Midwestern Childhood.* August House, 1995 141 min.
2 Audio Cassettes ISBN 0-87483-419-8 $18.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 9-12

Nine stories on two cassettes take listeners back to the rural Midwest of the 1950s. Funny, warm, and nostalgic, these personal stories from May's own childhood tell of experiences both poignant and humorous: picking wild chokecherries with his horse-trader father; learning the f-word; escaping from the family's mean and ornery duck; avoiding the dreaded cowpies; feeling the sorrow of killing a mourning dove with his first gun; learning about John Henry, the only black man in the community; helping the hobo in the barn on Christmas Day. Some of the funniest stories touch upon May's Catholic upbringing—his obsession with being the best altar boy, praying for the "poor souls," and being distracted from the church by his first case of puppy love. May's relaxed and easy delivery has a way of drawing listeners in until they are part of his community, too. A lone fiddle opens and closes each side.

MAY, JIM *Heroes, Heroines, and Boo Babies.* Jim May, 1991 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Bell Farm Recordings PS-Gr. 5

Personable storyteller Jim May presents several variations on traditional themes, opening with the giggle-inducing tale of the Boo Babies and the vanquishing of the ghost of Mable's Gable. This is followed by an Appalachian variant of "The Three Pigs," in which a wise pig outwits a wily fox. Side Two contains the lyrical and more sophisticated "Ina and the Eel," a Hawaiian tale of the origin of the coconut, and the appealing to all ages "Lazy Jack," an Appalachian clever-fool story. The stories are recorded live, and the appreciative audience adds to the overall impression of a high old storytelling time, but there is a small loss of visual humor as the audience sometimes laughs at visual cues that are not communicated in the actual language of the story. Nevertheless, children are in for a funny, thoughtful treat when they give this tape a listen. No specific source notes are included.

Moore, Robin *Awakening the Hidden Storyteller: How to Build a Storytelling Tradition In Your Family.* Shambhala Publications, 1991. 120 min.
2 Audio Cassettes ISBN 0-87773-623-5 $16.00
Dist. by Shambhala Publications Professional

Moore uses numerous visualization and New Age counseling techniques to explore story listening, storytelling, and the creation of stories. Believing that "inner work" is as important as technique, Moore presents exercises such as "recalling a fire memory," "visiting the museum of your childhood," "traveling into your tree," and "finding your guardian animal," to help listeners plumb their imaginations for sense memory and specific details. Original stories, a literary tale, and a Seneca folktale are woven into Moore's presentation, which is supported by musical background on the Celtic harp. The most pertinent information for beginning tellers will be the brief overviews of specific vocal training exercises and Moore's discussion of the tricks of the trade. The usefulness of the visualization exercises will depend upon a listener's learning style and individual taste, and although Moore is an apparent master of gentle encouragement, he does not always make a clear and concrete connection between visualization techniques, telling stories, and establishing a family tradition of storytelling. Novice tellers who are seeking conventional, how-to information on learning to tell stories will want to seek other sources in addition to this one. Professional tellers will be interested in Moore's approach to workshop presentation.

Moore, Robin *Fins, Furs and Feathers: Animal Tales from the Pennsylvania Mountains.* Groundhog Press, 1990. 45 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Groundhog Press Gr. 4-12

Moore shares six stories based on "tales Robin heard and things he experienced during his boyhood in the Pennsylvania mountains." "The Silver Lake Trout" is Moore's version of the funny story in which a fish is trained to survive on land but very nearly drowns when it falls into water. We find out how Turtle cracked his shell in "Turtle and the Wolves," a story reminiscent of Brer Rabbit and the Briar Patch. In "How Rabbit Stole Fire," a boy changes himself into a rabbit and steals back the fire that was taken from his people forty years before. "The Cherry Tree Buck" is a humorous tale in which a cherry pit, used as a bullet, lands on a deer's head and results in a cherry tree growing between his antlers (of course, the cherries the tree produces have little antlers on them). "Groundhog and the Bears" reveals how Groundhog got the job of telling us that spring has arrived, and an eagle raised among chickens learns of its true

heritage in "The Nittany Mountain Eagle." Moore's story selection is strong, and he has a friendly, intimate delivery that easily pulls listeners into the world of each story. Source notes are not included.

MOORE, ROBIN *What's Wild Is Wild: A Journey into the Wilderness of the Imagination.* Groundhog Press, 1992 45 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Groundhog Press
Gr. 6-12

Moore celebrates wildness and fantasy in six selections that test listeners' imagination. A man disgusted with life finds a magical bear to learn from and live with in "The Bear Man," and soon he is half-bear himself. A traditional Appalachian Mountain tale, "Hairywoman," is the strange story of a man's encounter with a silent eight-foot-tall wild woman, with whom he lives and fathers a son. "Hodadenon," a traditional Seneca story, tells of a boy who frees his family from the spell of seven wicked sisters. In the Inuit "Caribou Man," an unhappy man leaves home and becomes a caribou, while the mysterious "A Dream of Birds" describes a dream that is ultimately a celebration of life. The title story, an original tale, is a reminder of the wildness within us all. Moore's understated delivery suits the stories on this tape, which are long, intricate, and challenging. Specific sources are given for each selection.

MOORE, ROBIN *When the Moon is Full: Supernatural Stories from the Pennsylvania Mountains.* Groundhog Press, 1990 45 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Groundhog Press
Gr. 6-12

From "the dark side of the imagination" come four American folktales and one original Moore story based on Pennsylvania mountain motifs. "Stuffed Panther" tells of a mountain lion, shot, stuffed, and nailed to a rooftop, that comes back to life; a Lenape Indian legend describes "Skullplayer," the boy who helps to overcome Old One Eye, the evil sorcerer. "Uncle Bill's Dream" is a slightly ribald tale in which Uncle Bill wakes up from a dream to find himself chewing on his wife's leg. The Cherokee myth of "Spearfinger," a woman made out of stone who likes to feed on the livers of young children, is told against the sound of a thunderstorm, while in "Dark Catrina," Jack loves a mysterious dark-haired woman but discovers to his horror that she is a she-wolf. Moore combines his attractive, melodic voice with the occasional mournful violin, flute, or guitar; this background, plus a five-minute segment of howling wolves, adds to the haunting atmosphere of this eerie collection. Sources are given for the stories, which can be used in units on American Indians or folklore.

MORONEY, LYNN *The Star Husband and Other American Indian Star Stories*; music by Lean Nevaquaya. SkyTellers, Inc., 1994 45 min.
Audio Cassette $9.95
Dist. by Lynn Moroney * All ages

Moroney's sincere, elegant style of telling is remarkably effective, and her selection of tales from American Indian traditions is even more so. In "The Star Husband" a young woman marries Morning Star, only to be forced back to earth with her son after breaking a promise; "The Wives Who Ate Onions" gives the origin of the Pleiades constellation. Listeners discover that the Milky Way was formed "Where the Dog Ran" (from stolen cornmeal dripping from his mouth), and how the younger sun brother was turned into the moon in "How the Frog Got on the Moon." "The Seven Brothers and Their Sister" escape from a great herd of buffalo by shooting a magic arrow into a tree and jumping into the sky, only to turn into the Big Dipper; Coyote steals fire, gathers it into a ball, and tosses it into the heavens in "How Coyote Made the Sun." Simply and eloquently told, these six stories will enrich American Indian, folklore, or astronomy units. Sometimes amusing, sometimes hauntingly beautiful, the stories are enhanced by occasional flute and drum accompaniment. Sources are given for each story.

MORONEY, LYNN *Tales of the Sun and Moon.* Lynn Moroney, 1991 45 min.
Audio Cassette $9.95
Dist. by Lynn Moroney * All ages

Those who already have *The Feather Moon* in their collection know that Lynn Moroney makes great tapes, and this title is no exception. Her lyrical introductions and subdued, elegant telling style makes these seven tales memorable long after the tape has ended. While *Feather Moon* contained American Indian stories featuring the stars, this tape contains stories about the sun and moon, including "How Sun and Moon Got in the Sky," "Why There Is Day and Night," the lovely tale of the shy "Sun Sisters," and the comic tale of the love-seeking "Ballon the Moon." Tales from Nigeria, Australia, and China are enhanced by Moroney's respectful delivery and will fall gently on any listener's ear. Detailed source notes are included.

NATIONAL STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION *Best-Loved Stories Told at the National Storytelling Festival.* National Storytelling Press, 1991 110 min. 2 Audio Cassettes ISBN 1-879991-22-5 $17.95
Dist. By National Storytelling Association * Gr. 6-12

Recorded live at the National Storytelling Association's annual October festival in Jonesborough, Tennessee, this impressive collection,

showcasing many of the tellers who took part in the recent storytelling revival in America, provides ample reason to be grateful for the resurgence. Each of the ten stories included is well structured and masterfully told, but the similarities end there. The emphasis here is on the breadth and depth of storytelling today, with folktales ranging from Peninnah Schram's traditional Jewish version of "The Innkeeper's Wise Daughter" to Mary Carter Smith's "Cindy Elly," a modern resetting of "Cinderella" in an African-American community in urban Baltimore. Personal tales include Elizabeth Ellis's laugh-out-loud story of adolescent tribulations, "Flowers and Freckle Cream," but also Jim May's "A Bell for Shorty," an affectionate, grief-tinged remembrance of his father. Styles move from Jay O'Callahan's vocal virtuosity, in a manic recreation of a little boy's misadventures on his first overnight trip to Grandma's entitled "Orange Cheeks," to the deliberate, musically southern pace of Donald Davis, which serves as a backdrop for the eccentricities of an elderly widow in "C-R-A-Z-Y." Such variety carries a risk of awkward transitions from one teller and tale to the next, but the succession here is never jarring. Credit that to thoughtful production, which also includes excellent sound quality, something not always found in live recordings. Quality, more than anything else, is the unifying principle in this diverse collection. There are no source notes included.

NATIONAL STORYTELLING ASSOCIATION *Tales of Fools and Wise Folk.* National Storytelling Press, 1991. 50 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-879991-07-1 $11.95
Dist. by the National Storytelling Association Gr. 4-12

This well-produced installment in the National Storytelling Association's *Festival of Stories* series highlights the wisdom of fools and the foolishness of the wise in eight funny stories recorded live at the annual National Storytelling Festival. Within the basic thematic framework of this collection there is quite a variety of storytelling styles from which to choose. Barbara Freeman's "Dry Frye" and Michael Williams' "Old Man Bard" are both stories of cantankerous old gents that rely on the concise humor of jokelore. Heather Forest's "The Squire's Bride" and Bill Harley's "Monsters in the Bathroom" are both sung stories, but the first is a traditional clever-woman tale while the second is a contemporary portrayal of childhood fears. Mary Hamilton's "The Poor Man and the Rich Man's Purse" and Jackie Torrence's "Jack and the Northwest Wind" round out the traditional selections. The remaining tale, a hilarious literary story told by Jim May, is a portrait of "The Specialist," a man who has dedicated his life to the intricacies of outhouse construction. Harley's work is aimed at younger listeners, while the experience and knowledge of an older audience may be necessary to

appreciate the fun of the Freeman and May selections, but all in all, this is a crowd pleaser.

National Storytelling Association *Tales of Humor and Wit.* National Storytelling Press, 1991. 45 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-879991-06-3 $11.95
Dist. by the National Storytelling Association
Gr. 4-12

Rocky Balboa ("Yo, Cinderella. Wha's up?") makes for an unusual fairy godfather in a high-energy adaptation of the standard folktale, but he's got a good point when he says, "Hey Cindy, jus' go wid da flow." That's not too hard with this hilarious collection of seven stories recorded live at the National Storytelling Festival. Ed Stivender's "Cinderella" with an early '80s urban twist (and a heroine complete with two-piece, gold lamé Jordache outfit and glass Adidas sneakers) is perhaps the most offbeat number of the bunch. At the other end of the humor spectrum is Carol Birch, who handles the literate wordplay of Kipling's "How the Rhinosaurus Got His Skin" without any of the stiffness that sometimes accompanies live performances of the author's tongue-twisting tales. The remainder of this collection has a decidedly down-home flavor. A fine tandem telling by Elizabeth Ellis and Gayle Ross of "Obedient Jack" (a.k.a. "Jack's First Job") is followed by the misadventures of some amazing animals, including a walkin' catfish (brought to life by Doc McConnell) and a banjo-pickin' bear (rendered in story by David Holt). A Scripture-spouting country storekeeper speaks through Hannah McConnell Gillenwater and a small-town philosopher warns, "never blame anyone for bein' human . . . unless they make a habit of it" in the concluding spot, held with grace and style by the late, great Gamble Rogers. Expert timing and finesse, as essential as good material when it comes to humorous storytelling, are here in abundance as each performer brings off lots of laughs without a hitch. As with other selections from the NSA's *A Festival of Stories* series, the age appeal of these tales varies widely, and children as young as five will enjoy a number of the selections. Source notes are not included.

Nichols, Judy *Tales from the Heart.* Talespinner Productions, 1996. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Talespinner Productions
Gr. K-6

Nichols' voice has a comforting, jolly tone as she gently tells and retells original and traditional tales. Side One consists of four traditional or tradition-based tales: her reinterpretation of "Epaminondas" changes the protagonist to Pamela Amanda, whose mother once spent an entire year calling her by her full name; a delightful original tall tale features

Pecos Bill and his creative "come a-courtin'" present for his sweetheart. Also included are Aesop's "Lion and the Mouse" and "Joseph's Overcoat," the story of a tailor who remakes his overcoat so many times all he has left is the story. Side Two contains four tales based on jokelore or personal history: one centers on the phone-answering youngster who has his household in an uproar looking for him, another on the elephant trying not to sneeze in the back of the bus; there's a humorous tale about a young bride struggling to make "Lentil Soup" like her mother-in-law, and finally there's "Summer of Jim," a family story by Charlotte Stevens about life during the Depression and a young white girl's first encounter with a black man who worked for her family. Nichols moves easily from voice to voice, delineating with precision between characters and narrator. This is easy family listening with undercurrents of both mischief and pathos.

NOVAK, DAVID *The Cookie Girl.* August House, 1994. 56 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-389-2 $12.00
Dist. by August House * PS-Gr. 4

Novak tells a varied selection of child-pleasing material, including several original stories, two folktale adaptations, and one story-poem. The title story is about a little girl who refuses to eat anything but cookies all day long and who comes to a surprising end. "Oh! That's a Good Idea!" is an adaptation of an American Indian Coyote story that explains the origin of people; in this live performance, children are soon joining in with the oft-repeated refrain. "Give Me Back My Button," adapted from a Turkish folktale, will also have children chanting along with the words of the rooster whose diamond button is stolen by a greedy sultan. A traditional telling of Aesop's fable "The Grasshopper and the Ants" is followed by two amusing variations a la Novak. Especially clever is "Peter Piper's Plan," in which Peter, of the familiar Mother Goose tongue twister, is given an adventure in which almost every word begins with the letter P. Novak is a polished storyteller with a precise, inviting delivery. Lively, toe-tapping instrumental music provides background during and breaks between the stories.

NOVAK, DAVID *Itsy Bitsy Spider's Heroic Climb and Other Stories.* August House, 1994. 63 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-346-9 $12.00
Dist. by August House
PS-Gr. 4

Novak understands kids' humor, as proven by this collection of six stories taped in front of a live, laughing audience of children. The title story takes the well-known nursery song and transforms it into a mighty adventure story about the small spider who is determined to complete

his quest to the top of the spout, with the repeated refrain, "A spider's gotta do what a spider's gotta do." The irreverent "A Glass of Water" is a personal narrative of what happens when a schoolkid drinks too much liquid too long before the bathroom break. "Mon-Daw-Minh" is an Ojibwe Indian tale of a young boy's spirit quest and the discovery of how to grow corn. "Jack" is a rap version of "Jack and the Beanstalk," while "The Snake's Disguise" tells of people's reaction to the gremlin gift of snakes. Novak enhances all of the stories with animal sounds and other fancy vocalizations, but he never loses the thread of his story or fails to play to the humor of the moment.

O'HALLORAN, SUSAN *Growing Up in Chicago: Vol. I; White Like Me: Growing Up in Chicago: Volume II.* Susan O'Halloran, 1993. 65 min. ea. 2 Audio Cassettes. $10.00 Each
Dist. by O'Halloran and Associates Gr. 9-12

These two tapes contain personal narratives, most recorded in front of a live audience, about growing up on the southwest side of Chicago. O'Halloran's neighborhood was almost exclusively Irish Catholic, and her stories refer to the people of the community, family members, friends, and of course, the nuns who influenced her. In this series of coming-of age-stories, she reveals how she came to know worlds other than her own through various activities with her Christian youth group, where she was exposed to many kinds of people who had interests and political causes that were totally alien to her. O'Halloran's stories include a saga about her participation in her high school band ("The Mad Trumpeter of St. Thomas More"); "Music Lessons," which deals with the differences in the kinds of music teenagers listened to in the '60s; "City Girls," which tells how three girls from totally different backgrounds can find common ground; and "The Garbage Story," a moving tale of her discoveries of the racial inequalities that were happening in her own city. O'Halloran tells her tales with such humor and sensitivity that one often is reminded of listening to a particularly insightful stand-up comedienne or motivational speaker. Her unique perspective on her past gives a poignancy and universality to these half-dozen stories that will allow a wide variety of audiences to relate to her experiences.

O'HALLORAN, SUSAN *With a Little Help from My Friends*; music by Jenny Armstrong. Susan O'Halloran, 1995. 53 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by O'Halloran and Associates Gr. K-6

Five original stories and two adaptations of traditional tales are included in O'Halloran's tape for younger children. Her original stories have the atmosphere and structure of traditional folktales; this is particu-

larly evident in "The True King," in which two brothers set out to learn about the land that they are to inherit, the greedy brother only interested in riches, the kind one stopping to help people solve their problems. In "Keep an Open Mind," a young boat captain follows her heart and is richly rewarded. The ghost story "Too Tall" is told by a group of talented children and adults, and this chorale approach, combined with music and sound effects, gives the story the flavor of an old-fashioned radio play. The remaining short stories and songs refer to and reiterate the theme of "Too Tall," encouraging listeners to persevere in spite of their fears. This is a solid collection of simply told tales with a strong moral message.

Platt, Mary Rachel. *Tales of Wonder, Tales of Light.* Akanidi Productions, 1995. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Akanidi Productions Gr. 6-12

A half-dozen folktales with similar thematic elements are presented in a straightforward, deliberate style. In the first three stories—"The Old Woman and the Ear Tree" from Sweden, "The Long-Haired Girl" from China, and the MicMac Cinderella variant, "Strong Wind"—each protagonist is a poorly treated heroine whose triumph results from her good heart. There is greater contrast between the last two stories, the humorous "Abu Kassim's Magic Sandals" from Turkey and "The Sleeping Prince" from Spain, since their themes are dissimilar and Platt uses more voice characterizations and sound effects. Platt has a pretty voice and clear diction, and her measured delivery gives time for the images to settle in the listener's mind. Her ability to tell a story without large amounts of vocal gymnastics is admirable and allows the story to speak for itself. At times the tellings have a tonal similarity, resulting from the lack of thematic contrast between the stories, the uniformity of Platt's style, and the slow, purposeful pace; still, Platt's retellings are strong. Minimal source notes are given.

Powell, Patricia Hruby. *Hans & Gret: The Rap, and Other Stories From Around the World.* Patricia Hruby Powell, 1994. 58 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00 + $1.25 S&H
Dist. by Patricia Hruby Powell Gr. K-6

Powell effectively employs musical rhythms, sound effects, and subtle voice characterizations in her retelling of seven tales from as many cultures. The Mexican tale of "The Goat Who Couldn't Sneeze" lends itself particularly well to a group participation of *achoos!*, although the French dance terms have no translation to assist in their understanding. "Bella and Beastly" has a number of slyly modern references that lend

to age rather quickly, but it would work nicely as an example of retelling for a writing or English class. In "Hans and Gret: The Rap," Powell delivers a fairly well-conceived set of verses with a minimal number of forced rhymes and rhythms. All the tales are retold by Powell, and occasionally they reflect a literary formality that is somewhat distancing. No notes or sources are given for any of the tales, nor is it clear if the musical interludes are traditional cultural representations. The inclusion of sound effects is sometimes more distracting than enriching, but Powell's voice is pleasantly modulated and attractive and her sense of pacing is very strong. The story selections are excellent, and the formal but polished renditions will find favor with listeners.

RENEAUX, J. J. *Cajun Fairy Tales.* August House, 1995. 59 min. Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-87483-439-2. $12.00.
Dist. by August House. * Gr. 4-12

Look out, Wilhelm and Jacob—these Cajun fairy tales deliver familiar themes of good rewarded and evil punished, but with extra zest and spice. Reneaux's voice is rich and mellow with a Cajun lilt for, as notes point out, she grew up "Cajun for true." In "The Magic Gifts," the hero uses a gun, a fiddle, and a hat—all with magical powers—to outmaneuver a crafty and dishonorable rich man; "Jean Malin and the Bull Man" tells how Jean Malin saves his much-loved stepmother from marrying an evil sorcerer; "King Peacock" is a Snow White variant in which a jealous woman tries to kill her beautiful daughter, but true love triumphs in the end. "Marie Jolie" unknowingly marries the Devil himself, but this spunky heroine uses her wits and courage to escape and make a new life, while in a story reminiscent of "Hansel and Gretel," "Catafo and His Two Brothers" are abandoned by their poverty-stricken parents. Occasional sound effects and a lone violin—sometimes plaintive, sometimes lively—add depth and continuity.

RENEAUX, J. J. *Cajun Folktales.* August House, 1994. 57 min. Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-87483-383-3. $12.00.
Dist. by August House. * Gr. 4-12

Eight stories from Cajun country are told with style and dash by Cajun teller Reneaux. "Why Grease Lives in the Kitchen" tells how grease is the revenge of a beautiful bride against all cooks in memory of the one wicked cook who caused her to melt down. "Pierre and the Angel of Death" is the funny story of an exasperated wife who cleverly cures her husband of his constant complaining, while "St. Antoine, the Wonder Worker" is the sweet story about the joining of a rich young man and a poor orphan girl who loves him for himself. In "Roclore and His Bag of Tricks," a clever man outsmarts the king and marries the monarch's

daughter. Four other stories, funny and full of life, round out this fine collection. Reneaux's voice—sassy, smooth, rich, and warm—is a joy to listen to. Notes explain that she is a traditional storyteller who collects her material by word of mouth and then adds her own unique touches.

RENEAUX, J. J. *Cajun Ghost Stories.* August House, 1992. 68 min. Audio Cassette. ISBN 0-87483-210-1. $12.00
Dist. by August House. * Gr. 4-12

Six stories from the land of the bayous, told in Reneaux's rich and distinctive voice, cast their dark spell. We discover how her "cautious, not superstitious" grandmama kept the scary, bump-in-the-night creatures away with her home remedies and warned her granddaughter about "Half-Man," the creepy swamp monster. The greedy, miserly father of "Therese" causes her death while he sits and counts his gold coins, but he lives to regret it when her ghost comes back—her haunting cries are truly hair-raising. A courageous girl defeats supernatural wizard "Fifolet" with her secret ingredient—cayenne pepper. "The Ghost of Jean Lafitte" makes an appearance, and the story of Marie and her daughter "Rapadeen," their quarreling, and their final ghostly reconciliation is moving and memorable. These stories are a wonderful introduction to a body of American folklore, perfect for Halloween or any time of year.

RINGENBERG, MARIE. *The Nose Tree and Other Grimms' Fairy Tales.* Marie Ringenberg, 1995. 55 min.
Audio Cassette. $10.00
Dist. by Marie Ringenberg. Gr. K-6

A lovely mix of known and not-so-well-known tales from the Grimm Brothers is presented in Ringenburg's clear, melodic voice. These four tales include "The Nose Tree," in which three soldiers seek their fortunes and find it, to the dismay of a larcenous princess; the well-known "Bremen Town Musicians"; "The Twelve Hunstmen," in which a princess wins back her faithless betrothed; and "Jorinda and Joringel," wherein a young man rescues his love from the enchantment of a wicked witch. Ringenberg's delivery has a measured, formal deliberateness that could benefit from a more apparent appreciation of the tales' inherent humor, as well as a stronger sense of timing and pacing. Although in some parts listeners may wish for richer language in the telling of these classics, the stories are not robbed of their power or fun: the green slime described in the title cut is vividly and hilariously depicted, for instance. A short German blessing song makes a satisfying conclusion. The brief description and times given for each story will be helpful to teachers seeking to include this material in their curriculums.

SACRÉ, ANTONIO *Looking for Papito.* Antonio Sacré, 1996 40 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 1-886283-09-5 $10.00
Dist. by Woodside Avenue Music Productions Gr. 4-12

Sacré tells stories of his family history and his cultural background and traditional tales with a Latino flair on this energetic storytelling tape. An informal yet exuberant style enriches his outlandish account of how his father came to America from Cuba, and the well-known Appalachian tale of "Foolish Jack" is given a unique Latino spin. Sacré's story about being teased about his name when he was a kindergartener and as a result refusing to speak Spanish anymore is both revealing and touching; his grandmother Mimi, however, refuses to speak anything but Spanish, and she reminds the boy of his linguistic origins by making him name all the food in the refrigerator, resulting in a bilingual food fight. With musical interludes on guitar and a generous sprinkling of Spanish, Sacré opens a window to his life and culture and leaves it open for the rest of us to explore our own stories and history.

SAN ANTONIO STORYTELLERS' ASSOCIATION *Many Tricksters.* University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio, 1996 56 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by the Institute of Texan Cultures * All ages

This excellent collection of trickster tales from around the world presents a pleasing variety of stories, tellers, voices, and styles, from the Texas drawls of Angela Klinger and Mary Grace Ketner, to Mark Babino's Creole and African-American telling style, to a Jewish trickster tale from Ed Brown. Each teller obviously delights in the mischief of tricks and tricksters, taking advantage of the chance to make his or her tale shine. The diversity avoids being overwhelming through the use of the unifying trickster theme and by the careful use of sly, trickster-reminiscent music. Particularly enjoyable are the German "Fox and Geese," told by Klingler, and "Straighten Up and Fly Right," an African-American tale told by Babino. In both these stories, the trickster is tricked by his would-be victims, offering a satisfying turn-of-the-table in a tape packed with tricksters who are rewarded for their sneaky ways.

SANFIELD, STEVE *The Great Turtle Drive;* music by the Backwoods Jazz Quartet. Backlog Book Services, 1996 46 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Backlog Book Services Gr. 4-12

In this combination of four thematically different stories, Sanfield gives jovial voice to stories he has since published in print versions. In a

variation of the Jewish folksong, a tailor will not waste even a scrap of fabric; a foolish couple's yen for apple strudel wreaks havoc on the town of Chelm; a melancholy girl befriends a goose that teaches her the value of a song; and a western spoof (recorded live) about a turtle drive comes complete with cowboys, turtles, and hilariously bad puns. Sanfield doesn't rush his stories to their conclusions, and he takes his time delivering the humorous or touching moments. Brief musical bridges of Dixieland and other string band music links the stories. Younger listeners may not get all the jokes in the sophisticated wordplay of "The Great Turtle Drive," but this is still an original and eclectic, if thematically unlinked, compilation.

SCHUTZ-GRUBER, BARBARA G. *A Little Sugar, a Lot of Spice.* Barbara G. Schutz-Gruber, 1993. 52 min.
Audio Cassette $9.95
Dist. by Barbara G. Schutz-Gruber Gr. 4-12

A lively collection of folktales and ballads told and sung in a crisp, pleasant style, the material on this tape is strongly rooted in the folk tradition, including an adaptation of the story of Shahrazad, from the Arabian Nights; "The Three Spinners," from the Brothers Grimm; and "Chang Fa," a Chinese folktale about a young woman who saves her village from drought. The several Child ballads and stories based on them include a recitation of "The Devil and the Farmer's Wife," an irreverent tale about the devil's biting off more than he can chew; "Lady Isabel," a sung ballad in which the innocent but not foolish maiden turns the tables on a murderous rogue; and "Dancing Kate," in which young Kate dances some unchivalrous knights right into the castle floor. Schutz-Gruber plays the hammered dulcimer and has a clear singing voice, and she uses each of these talents to good effect in complementing the telling of these tales. The inclusion of the participatory cumulative tale "The Old Woman and Her Pig" is somewhat odd in a selection of this sophistication, but listeners won't mind because the heroines of these tales are so engaging. A teacher's guide with activities is available, and minimal source notes are included.

SCHUTZ-GRUBER, BARBARA *String Things: Stories, Games and Fun!* BGSG Storytelling, 1995. 46 min.
Video Cassette $19.95 + $3.00 S&H
Dist. by Barbara G. Schutz-Gruber * Gr. K-8

This is an elegantly produced storytelling video, visually enhanced by Schutz-Gruber's demonstration of string figures for every story told. Schutz-Gruber's storytelling is as elegant as this video presentation—

without a wasted word or gesture, she delivers a half dozen traditional tales, including "Maui's Gifts," Mother Goose's "St. Ives Riddle," and "Anansi the Spider." The stories are told and the string figures demonstrated in Part One; in Part Two, Schutz-Gruber, with the assistance of some child helpers, teaches viewers how to do the string figures she uses to accompany her stories. Schutz-Gruber's sense of style pervades this video—the set is handsome, the camera work is interesting without being busy, and both the delivery of story and the accompanying instruction/demonstration is nearly flawless. Gentle running commentary ties story, string, and demonstrations together. Schutz-Gruber delivers a video suitable for family viewing, craft programs, professional development, and coaching.

SCHUTZ-GRUBER, BARBARA *Trickster Tales from Around the World.* BGSG Storytelling, 1991. 58 min.
Audio Cassette only $9.95 + $1.50 S&H. Cassette and Teacher's Guide $24.95 + $3.00 S&H
Dist. by Barbara G. Schutz-Gruber Gr. K-6

Four well-paced, elaborately expository trickster tales from four different cultures are handily and elegantly told by Schutz-Gruber, whose wry delivery and superb sense of timing enhances the inherent humor of these tales. The Zuni tale of "Coyote and the Blackbirds" has trickster Coyote trying to impress a beautiful Blackbird maiden with his dancing prowess; "Five of the Seven Great Deeds of Maui" from the Pacific include pulling the island of Maui from the sea and gaining the secret of fire; an Appalachian Jack tale (based on Hans Christian Andersen's "Clodhopper Hans") has Jack desultorily herding sheep until the young queen puts out a call for court advisors; and in the Zambian "Tortoise and Hyena," the slow but wise tortoise outwits the foolish if wily Hyena. Schutz-Gruber has a streamlined directness to her delivery that makes these stories come to earthy and immediate life. Musical bridges and songs add to the easy flow of this cleanly produced and professionally presented selection. A teaching guide is available that provides story transcripts, background information, classroom activities, and other resources. Source notes are included.

SCHUTZ-GRUBER, BARBARA G. *Voices on the Wind.* Barbara G. Schutz-Gruber, 1993. 57 min.
Audio Cassette $9.95 + $1.50 S&H
Dist. by Barbara G. Schutz-Gruber Gr. 6-12

A selection of unusual, eerie material, some supernatural, some historical and frighteningly real, is given a precise, evocative delivery. Both songs and stories are included and Schutz-Gruber's strong voice carries

the *a cappella* parts confidently, while a restrained use of sound effects greatly adds to the listeners' enjoyment. From the French Voyageur tale "The Mysterious Rider," in which an evil spirit possesses a race-winning thoroughbred, to the tragic "Wall of Fire," an historical tale about the 1881 Michigan's Thumb fire; to W. H. Hodgson's "Moss Island," in which a deserted island possesses a lone shipwreck survivor, Schutz-Gruber delivers these haunting narratives in a quietly chilling fashion. "The Three Wishes," an excellent adaptation of "The Monkey's Paw," should be of interest to teachers of the short story, while the gentle, minor-scale delivery of the included ballads has an appropriately chilling effect.

SHANTA *Light Worker: Stories with Music*; music by Shanta and Samana. Storywiz Records, 1994 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Compact Disc $15.00
Dist. by Storywiz Records Gr. 4-12

Shanta identifies herself as a storyteller, musician, and channeler, bringing forth stories from the higher spirits, and indeed this collection of original stories has a mystical quality throughout. From the tale of lonely "Monkeye," who befriends her reflection in the water and discovers her oldest friend, to the story of Ekha, a brutal hunter who faces his own transformation in a magical desert, to "The Loving Ones," in which a group of young people go questing, the stories all contain messages of love, healing, peace, and the discovery of one's inner strength. Enhancing the stories is a soundtrack using a full range of African and Asian instruments including a Kenyan harp, a Nigerian reed zither, and a sitar. The story "A Village of Women," about a community of strong women who face a challenge to their knowledge, features Samana, a musical group consisting of sitar, bass, and flute players. The choice of stories and Shanta's lyrical, mesmerizing voice combine to create a unique, thought-provoking listening experience.

SIMMS, LAURA *Making Peace—Heart Uprising*; music by Randall Crafton, Abdul Rahman Mangara, Steve Gorn, et al. Earwig Music, 1993 68 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Compact Disc $14.00
Dist. by Earwig Music * Gr. 6-12

On this masterful tape, Simms interweaves traditional stories with personal tales and anecdotes from her own experiences as an urban storyteller. Tales from a variety of cultures including India, ancient Persia, Africa, and the Middle East are seamlessly meshed with the accounts of

presenting stories to angry high school students and giving her mother's sealskin coat to a homeless woman. Music is woven purposefully through most of Simms' stories—it conveys the story's mood, provides transition, serves as a pacesetter, and builds dramatic suspense. Simms' gifts are her ability to convey character through voice and her sense of theater—she uses both to great effect here. Listeners will leave the tape with strong stories, a strong sense of the storyteller's personality, and a strong sense of place; those who enjoy music's ability to enhance a story will find this tape especially sensual and involving. Students of world cultures, storytelling advocates (teachers, tellers, and coaches), and public and school librarians will find this tape of immeasurable value.

SPELMAN, JON *Jon Spelman Tells Tales.* Jon Spelman, 1991. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $11.00
Dist. by Public Productions
Gr. 4-12

Jon Spelman has a playful style of storytelling in which he tinkers with words, characters, and folktale motifs. He takes words and twists them around on his tongue, as in the story "My Gal Sal," an original story told backwards, or as in "Bitter Batter Better Butter," a tongue-twister turned tale. Thanks to Spelman's deadpan delivery, his stories sound remarkably plausible even in tall tales like "The Snake and the Frog," a very fishy tale indeed. Spelman's adaptations of traditional folktales are peppered with colorful language and phrases—characters in "The Old Giant" (a variant of "Jack the Giant Killer"), for instance, are "very poor, so they didn't have time for much quarreling." Listeners get just the facts, thank you, in his version of Cinderella, "Mr. King and the Golden Slippers," but they'll enjoy some lovely turns of phrase in another Cinderella variant, "Grass Cape." In his version of the traditional and oft-told "The Old Lady and the Pig," Spelman builds the tale with an accumulation of sound effects until no words are needed for the final resolution of the old lady's porcine problem. Have fun with these eleven stories—it's clear Spelman did. There are no notes or sources included.

STALLINGS, FRAN *Cat o' Nine Tales: Stories & Songs About Cats;* music by Fran Stallings, Gail Huggett, and Moby Anderson. Prairie Fire, 1994. 51 min.
Audio Cassette $12.00
Dist. by Prairie Fire Productions
Gr. 7-12

Seven stories and ten songs, all with our feline friends for inspiration, capture listeners on this lively and engaging tape. Stallings' autoharp, Gayle Huggett's hammer dulcimer, and Moby Anderson's string bass

bring us some toe-tapping music. The stories tell "Why Some Dogs Chase Cats" and the importance of "A Second Language," as a cat reveals the advantage of speaking dog. "The Antiquer's Cat" is a well-known joke expanded to an earthy short story, something of an anomaly in what is essentially a collection of traditional tales and music. "The Cat Who Became Queen" is a lovely story from India in which a king's desire for a child causes his many wives to pretend that a child has been born. (It is really a cat, but the goddess Parvati puts everything right in the end.) "The Cat and the Cow-Horse" started off as a Lebanese tale, but Stallings' telling turns it into a funny Western story of how a cowboy used his cat to save him from a rash promise. Stallings has a clean, crisp delivery; her voice is expressively melodic and her pacing is effective. A combination of humorous and touching, the songs are bound to have listeners singing along. You don't have to be a cat lover to love this one. Written sources are given for each story, with alternative versions also cited.

Stallings, Fran *Cranes' Gratitude and Other Tales of Animal Wit and Wisdom.* Prairieflower, 1992. 43 min.
Audio Cassette $12.00
Dist. by Prairie-Fire Productions Gr. 2-12

From Brazil, Burma, Japan, Germany, the Baltics, and the Jewish rabbinical tradition come seven animal stories, from which listeners can learn lessons of human and animal nature. Discover how Brazilian beetles got their colorful coats, how Wise Rabbit escaped a tyrant lion's loyalty test, and how a clever artist fooled a cat by carving a mouse out of dried fish. Hear how a patient bird tries to teach a wealthy but arrogant man the three rules of wisdom, and learn why spiders catch flies. A funny Grimms' tale tells how a fox is outwitted by some geese, and the closing story, "The Crane's Gratitude," is a beautiful and classic Japanese tale of a good deed rewarded that incorporates Japanese words in the telling. Stallings' precise telling style has an expressive emotionality that is all the more effective for being skillfully controlled. Useful in folktale units, this quiet tape offers a good range of clever and engaging stories. Sources notes are included.

Stansfield, John *Favorite Stories.* John Stansfield, 1982 (digitally remastered in 1997). 52 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by John Stansfield Gr. 4-8

A combination of animal and supernatural tales are presented on this low-key but ultimately effective tape. "How Coyote Got His Lunch" is "an original natural history story" about Coyote and his search for food

that includes information about the coyote's natural habitat; "Coyote and the Lizards" is from a Navajo folktale in which Coyote finds himself wanting to play the games the lizards play but meets his match when he plays with a big rock. The Appalachian "Sody Sallyratus," adapted from Richard Chase's *Grandfather Tales*, is told here with a consistently believable Southern drawl. The weakest tales on the tape are "The Split Dog," the oft-told tale about a dog whose body gets split in half and is awkwardly but advantageously rejoined, and the well-worn joke ghost story "The Rapping." Lovely retellings of the Japanese tale of "The Tongue Cut Sparrow" and the Yupik Eskimo story of "Tutakemseqaq," a woodcarver whose carvings of women come to life, are included in the seven tales. Stansfield has a pleasant, gentle voice, and these are clear, straightforward tellings of stories with sufficient diversity to be a good addition to multicultural collections. Minimal source notes are included.

STAVISH, CORINNE *I'd Rather Be Me.* Corinne Stavish, 1992. 58 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Corinne Stavish Gr. 4-12

The Jewish klezmer music between the stories sets a festive mood for this collection of stories celebrating self-worth. Told in a warm and charming manner, the assortment includes adaptations of traditional fables and teaching tales as well as a literary story by Susan Sussman about being Jewish at Christmas time, made personal by Stavish's delivery. Traditional tales include "The Stonecutter," a Japanese tale about a mason who discovers his personal power, and "Little Crow," an Aesop's fable adaptation. A personal story about "Grandpa Sam" is a touchingly humorous tribute to a beloved "five-foot giant of a grandfather" that is sure to evoke listeners' own memories. Stavish's voice is expressive and controlled, her timing and pacing is excellent, and her delivery is pointed and assured. Excellent notes tell both the source of each story and the storyteller whose work has influenced it.

STAVISH, CORINNE *Tales Through the Ages for All Ages.* Corinne Stavish, 1992. 50 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Corinne Stavish Gr. 4-12

This live recording presents tales from a wide variety of well-known sources, from Chaucer to Aesop to Chelm, told in a pleasant voice and with strong pacing. The music between the tales, mostly piano, is helpful to clear the palate for the next story. Opening with the American Indian *pourquoi* tale, "How Bear Has a Stumpy Tail," Stavish segues into the Arthurian legend of "The Loathly Lady," followed by several

Jewish tales of the fools of Chelm. The second side opens with "Things Couldn't Possibly Be Worse," from the Jewish tradition, followed by a Scottish variant of "Please All, Please None" entitled "Trying to Please Everyone." The Scottish burr used for "Trying to Please Everybody" is somewhat distracting, while the refrain in the concluding tale "Just Enough to Make A Story," though probably charming to a live participating audience, is a bit too repetitious for an audio recording. Stavish is gifted with a attractive voice and a compelling delivery style; these qualities and her story selection make this a tape worth having. No notes or sources are included.

STAVISH, CORINNE *Women: Willful, Witty, Wise.* Corinne Stavish, 1994. 51 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Corinne Stavish Gr. 6-12

The tape of "strong women" stories from the Jewish tradition has some unusual offerings: here is Lilith, Adam's first wife, refusing to be obedient; Judith, the warrior judge, who defeated Holofernes; and even a Cinderella variant called "Shmutzie," reminiscent of Richard Chase's "Like Meat Loves Salt." "Saykhl the Wise" is a clever woman story (some may be familiar with it as a variant of "Clever Gretel"), in which a clever young woman marries—and makes wiser—an educated rabbi. The tales are well-crafted and delivered in a direct, expressive manner that draws listeners gently in. A literary story by Allan Sherman, "A Football for Grandma," seems just slightly off the theme—its focus is a misunderstanding between a father and son that causes the father to remember the immigrant grandmother who adored and redeemed him—but it is still a touching, effective story for the closing spot on the tape. Brief source notes and running times are given.

STEVENS-NEWCOMB, BARB *The Daughters of Ishi-shini: Ancient Tales of the Americas.* Barb Stevens-Newcomb, 1996. 59 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Compact Disc $15.00
Dist. by Black Cricket Press Gr. 7-12

Spanish words are smoothly woven into the English retellings of stories from North, Central, and South America. In "Lucia Zenteno," the title character catches the river in her long, dark hair and takes it up the mountain, away from the villagers who have ostracized her; in "Iadilla," a prideful father forces his son Iadilla to fast in order to achieve greatness, until the son is transformed into a bird. Although an older audience will be able to infer and create their own meanings, some of the

tales suffer from a lack of cultural context. Stevens-Newcomb tells this selection of five stories in a soothing voice, and her presentation is enhanced by the subtle use of sound effects. While more detailed notes on the sources of these stories would be helpful, the tales themselves are varied, offering a sampling of different story traditions in the Americas.

STONE, SUSAN *The Angel's Wings and Other Stories* from *The Diamond Tree: Jewish Tales from Around the World*; music by Don J. Jacobs, Terran Doehrer, Henry Criz, et al. Susan Stone, 1991. 48 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Susan Stone * All ages

Seven selections from Howard Schwartz and Barbara Rush's fine collection of folktales, *The Diamond Tree: Jewish Tales from Around the World*, are told here in Stone's clear and expressive voice. "The Goblin" introduces listeners to an Eastern European demon who is finally overcome, while "Katanya" is a little girl sent by the prophet Elijah to comfort a poor old woman. Another young heroine uses "The Angel's Wings" to return a jewel to its rightful place in the throne of glory, while "The Prince Who Thought He Was a Rooster" is finally cured by a wise man who understands compassion and empathy. Stone has a melodic voice and a vibrant delivery; she introduces each tale with a gentle prologue relating the traditional tale to a personal experience. Sources are given for the stories, which are quite old (some come from the fifth, eleventh, and thirteenth centuries); musical instruments provide sound effects within and connectivity between the tales.

THE STORYCRAFTERS *Apples, Corn, & Pumpkin Seeds*. The Storycrafters, 1996. 40 min.
Videocassette $14.95
Dist. by Galler West Productions PS-Gr. 3

THE STORYCRAFTERS *Ladder to the Moon*. The Storycrafters, 1996. 48 min.
Videocassette $14.95
Dist. by Galler West Productions PS-Gr. 3

Scenic opening camera work sets the tone for the two storytellers, Jeri Burns and Barry Marshall, telling traditional tales in tandem before a small audience of children. The storytellers have complementary styles and accompany their bouncy audience-participation stories with a variety of musical refrains and instruments. On *Apples, Corn & Pumpkin Seeds*, a hunter gets a big surprise from "The Singing Goose," an old woman has a strange visitor in "A Creepy Caller," and the Puerto Rican version of "The Squeaky Door" concludes the tape with a plethora of

sound effects. On *Ladder to the Moon*, the mischievous monkey Sambalelei learns a much-needed lesson, a young girl proves her heroism in "The Legend of Sea Girl," and Polar Bear and Hunting Dog take listeners on a race to the edge of the world. Chatty lead-ins and conclusions have a slightly stagey feel to them, as do the interactions between the tellers and their "special friend," Jen, which act as a medium for communicating information not contained within the stories themselves. Burns and Marshall possess the comfortable ease of long-time tandem tellers, and they manage to overcome the disadvantages of live-action videotape with their determinedly cheerful, upbeat delivery. This would make a welcome change from the usual school or library film fare, and caregivers will appreciate the wholesome story selections and the accompanying cultural and musical information.

THE STORYCRAFTERS *Straw into Gold: World Tales with Music & Song Retold by the Storycrafters*; music and tellings by Barry Marshall and Jeri Burns. The Storycrafters, 1997 56 min.
Audio Cassette $9.95
Dist. by The Storycrafters Gr. 3-8

Tandem tellings are interwoven with music (percussion and singing) as modern-day troubadours The Storycrafters present participation stories and songs from a variety of cultures. From Cameroon comes "A Gourd of Palm Wine," in which an entire community outsmarts itself through selfishness but learns a valuable lesson. A strong telling, it showcases the Storycrafters' musical talent and engaging style. "The Rumpelstiltskin Rap" is a rap retelling of the traditional Grimms' tale with drum accompaniment and participatory refrain; Aesop's traditional sons and their father have been transformed into three sisters and their wise grandmother in the Storycrafters' retelling of "A Bundle of Sticks." "Dancing Jack" (a 27-minute-long retelling of the familiar Appalachian tale of "Lazy Jack" or "Foolish Jack") is filled with expression as well as the sound of banjos, spoons, whistling birds, a repeating ditty, and a multitude of vocal effects, some of which slow the story's pace. Musical accompaniment enhances most tales, although it occasionally threatens to overwhelm the narrative flow. Minimal source information is included.

THE STORY PEDDLERS (MYERS, BOB AND KATHIE) *The Two of Us*. Bob and Kathie Myers, 1990 45 min.
Audio Cassette $9.95
Dist. by Bob and Kathie Myers Gr. 4-12

Recorded live, this tape features folktales, the poem "Little Orphant Annie" by James Whitcomb Riley, and "The Celebrated Jumping Frog

of Calaveras County" by Mark Twain, which is told in Bob Myers' comfortable and folksy style. The macabre but funny "Aaron Kelly" tells how the dead Aaron refuses to stay in his grave, much to the consternation of his wife; the equally amusing "A Fish Story" introduces us to a fish that is trained to live out of water until the day that it accidentally drowns; in "Maggie," a feisty, adventuresome little girl outsmarts Rotunda, one of three ugly old women who like to cook and eat children. "Jack's Brains," a variant of the Irish "Morgan and the Pot o' Brains," has Jack finding brains at last when his wife helps him to answer three riddles posed by the conjure woman. Three short dog stories (jokes, really) conclude this amusing tape; contemporary references add to the humor overall. While the selections on this tape are fairly well-known, this husband-and-wife team have an undramatic, folksy style that many listeners will find appealing. Brief source notes are given for each story.

STORYTELLING WORLD *Choices of Voices.* Storytelling World, 1995 60 min.
Audio Cassette and Magazine $11.00 + $2.00 S&H
Dist. by Storytelling World Professional

Intended to be used in conjunction with the Winter/Spring 1995 edition of *Storytelling World Magazine*, this is a fine training as well as listening tape. Side One opens with eight different tellers retelling Aesop's brief fable "The Crow and the Pitcher," and this alone is worth the price of the tape as example of varied retelling styles, including several musical variations. Additional stories—Judith Black's fable about Cynthia, the caterpillar holding on to her dreams, Roger Petersen's personal tale about his grandpa's gramophone, and Karen Golden's fish story—are all used to demonstrate concepts mentioned in the commentary regarding retelling techniques, sound effects, and the pyrotechnics of the human voice. This tape is an informative and effective teaching tool for classroom and individual use, and it is accompanied by the Choices of Voices issue of *Storytelling World.*

THE STORYWEAVERS (LUCINDA FLODIN AND DENNIS FREDERICK) *Jack and Friends.* The Storyweavers, 1995 54 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by The Storyweavers * All ages

"Now, time out," says Dennis Frederick, interrupting the story "Jack Gets a Job." "Be clear, Jack is not dumb. He's just one of those people . . . that has to learn things in his own way, in his own time." And that's the Jack who stars in these three "Jack Tales" told by masters of tandem storytelling. Jack may seem simple at times but his heart

is huge, and he always ends up on his feet. In "Jack Gets a Job," probably one of the most oft-told Jack tales, Jack, only trying to follow directions, loses each day's pay in the most ridiculous of circumstances; in "Lucinda and Jack," Jack's wife discovers gold but has to come up with an elaborate plan to keep Jack from telling her secret; "Jackie and the West Wind" is a female Jack tale of a woman who receives gifts of magic but squanders them on the boy she thinks she loves. The narration and lines of dialogue are pitched back and forth between the tellers in an involving rapid-fire fashion. Frederick provides Jack with a great character voice, silly little giggle and all. These tellers are clearly having a grand time telling these humorous tales, and their affection for their subject, simple Jack, comes through with every turn of phrase.

The Storyweavers (Lucinda Flodin and Dennis Frederick)
Mountain Spirits. The Storyweavers, 1992. 54 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by the Storyweavers Gr. 6-12

This team of two are impressive in their ability to take any genre of tale and present it in an enjoyable, accessible way. The subject of these original tales is the various spirits and spiritlike apparitions that inhabit the Tennessee mountains. "Mountain Spirit" salutes the spirituality within the mountains and the various ways in which it manifests itself; "In the Morning" is a bittersweet tale of the abiding love between a husband and his wife. "The Crossing" is an old-fashioned ghost story about a man, dead ten years, who returns to save a girl's imperiled father, while "Elda," the only story told exclusively by Flodin, tells of her encounter with a spirit of the natural world. "Elda" opens and closes with a haunting song, the tune of which is hummed repeatedly behind the narrative. In "The Root Cellar," an old man will not rest in peace until he is with his beloved apple trees. Dennis Frederick and Lucinda Flodin are appropriately named The Storyweavers, as they lyrically thread their stories back and forth, from teller to teller and from tellers to listeners. Author notes are included.

The Storyweavers (Lucinda Flodin and Dennis Frederick)
Strawberries in the Snow. The Storyweavers, 1990. 52 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by The Storyweavers All ages

A polished team of tandem tellers presents fairy and folktales through skillful sharing of narration and dialogue. Side One includes "Strawberries in the Snow," an expertly distilled adaptation of the Czechoslovakian tale perhaps more familiarly known as "The Month Brothers," and "The Three Sillies," a humorous adaptation of the

traditional English folktale about a young man whose search for fools takes a lot less time then he thinks it will. Three original unicorn stories by Theresa Bohannon make up Side Two: in "The Greatest Gift" a loving daughter seeks a bit of unicorn horn to cure her sick mother; in "Griffen's Tears" a young prince frees a captive unicorn; and in "The Heart of the Beholder" a spoiled princess demands a unicorn as a pet. These three highly romantic, somewhat fulsome, but still satisfying stories are linked together when the heroes of the first two stories are joined together in the third. The beautifully timed delivery of these tellers helps overcome any structural weaknesses in the original tales. The tellers complement each other effortlessly as they alternate the artful delivery of narrative and dialogue, which provides a great deal of variety held together by a strong sense of unity.

THE STORYWEAVERS (LUCINDA FLODIN AND DENNIS FREDERICK) *A War of Roses: Suffrage in Tennessee.* The Storyweavers, 1995. 45 min.
Audio Cassette. $10.00
Dist. by The Storyweavers Gr. 6-12

In alternating voices, Lucinda Flodin and Dennis Frederick relate the story of the battle for Women's Suffrage in Tennessee with passion and conviction. Using a combination of primary and secondary sources and some unique creativity, Flodin and Frederick have imagined an involving dialogue between a sometimes argumentative, sometimes ruminative, man and woman. Quotes from the anti-suffrage press, suffragists, and legislators enliven the debate, as The Storyweavers present the legislative process leading to the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. The title of the tape refers to the wearing of roses in the lapels of pro and anti-suffragists, yellow roses for suffrage, red roses for anti-suffrage. The anti-suffragists battled the move for women's suffrage with inflammatory rhetoric, impassioned columns in the press, and bourbon; the pro-suffragists battled back with legal opinions, eloquent appeals in the press, and some inflammatory rhetoric of their own. The Storyweavers have managed to make this historical debate exciting, pertinent, and involving, which is no small task. Hats off to The Storyweavers—and to the suffragists. Historical notes are included.

STOTTS, STUART *I'm Not Scared.* Stuart Stotts, 1992. 52 min.
Audio Cassette. $10.00
Dist. by Tomorrow River Music * Gr. 3-6

Stotts, an accomplished vocalist, guitarist, and banjo player, is accompanied by a talented group of musicians as he relates stories (in the sung and spoken word) of ghosts both malevolent and benevolent. Opening

with the whistling-in-the-dark tune "I'm Not Scared," Stotts segues into a family story about his grandfather's encounter with "The Bookcase Ghost," in which Granddad ignores some excellent advice and suffers the consequences. The music ranges in tone from the bouncily scary "What You Gonna Do?" to the melodic instrumental "Owl in the Churchyard" to the spooky, whispery "Nightmares." "Old Jack," the story of a ghostly fiddle player, is effectively told with haunting background fiddle music. Stotts has a matter-of-fact, expressive delivery, and he never overplays his hand, resulting in effective understatement that makes his storytelling subtle, clean, and effective. From the kid-appealing spooky cover to the kid-appealing content, this is one fine storytelling experience.

THOMASON, DOVIE *Lessons From the Animal People*; music by Ulali. Yellow Moon Press, 1996. 90 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-938756-50-8 $9.95
Dist. by Yellow Moon Press All ages

Thomason is of Lakota and Kiowa Apache heritage, and she grew up listening to her grandmother's stories about the animal people. In a rich voice that convincingly characterizes different animal people, she retells nine wise and entertaining teaching tales. From Ant, listeners learn the need for balance; from Owl the foolishness of impatience; from Turtle the value of listening; from Chipmunk the beauty of friendship; from the boy who went to live with the bears the importance of family loyalty and courage. Children helped Thomason choose the stories for this collection, and the tales are full of an emotional resonance and humor that will particularly appeal to the young. Songs by the American Indian women's band Ulali alternate with Thomason's tales, adding a rhythmic, melodic richness and depth to the tape's careful arrangement. All stories are specifically sourced to an individual teller and a particular tribe or nation.

THOMASON, DOVIE *Wopila: A Giveaway*; music by Kevin Locke. Yellow Moon Press, 1993. 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-938756-44-3 $9.95
Dist. by Yellow Moon Press Gr. K-6

Thomason offers these seven Lakota stories as a *wopila*, a giveaway, with the prayer that they "help the children today to learn the good ways of our relatives who came before us." While never overtly didactic, these tales do have much to say about human nature and, in particular, the consequences of personal choice. The selections on Side One are quite varied: there is the uncommon loyalty of "The Pet Donkey" and the ridiculous timidity of "The Rabbit People"; she also tells

of "The Spirit Wife," driven away by harsh words, and "Iya," the camp eater, who gains his entrée disguised as a baby. Side Two focuses entirely on the trials (usually self-inflicted) of the vain and foolish trickster Iktomi. Thomason's voice is rich and expressive; her dignified and carefully worded tellings exhibit a fine sense of humor, particularly in her vocal characterizations. The Lakota traditionally shared these stories on long winter nights, and listeners might want to try the same with this thought-provoking but accessible collection. Specific source notes are not included.

TIMPANELLI, GIOIA *Stories.* Yellow Moon Press, 1990. 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-938756-29-X $9.95
Dist. by Yellow Moon Press Gr. 9-12

This recording contains a mixture of personal stories and adaptations of German and Sicilian folktales. Recorded during an improvisational studio telling, the tales are linked together by the themes of change and of the unexpected gifts encountered in life. The Sicilian tales are "Giufa," about a lucky fool who teaches listeners not to judge a man's worth by the clothes on his back, and "Rusidda and the Garbage Pit," a story about generosity and greed. "The Shoemaker and the Elves" and "Cinderella" are from the Grimm Brothers; Robert Graves' "Eros" and three personal stories complete this offering. Timpanelli has a deep, rich voice and a quietly emotive delivery that may ultimately have a somnolent effect, and some listeners may consider the structure of the tales a bit unpolished, but those looking for unusual, not often-told tales will find something of value here. Timpanelli provides some background information about the Sicilian folk tradition, as well as her own family's traditions; Italian words and phrases are translated in context. Limited source notes are given.

TORRENCE, JACKIE *The Accidental Angel.* August House, 1993. 40 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-330-2 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 9-12

Four very spiritual stories about angels and angel-like people she has known compose this intimate presentation by premier storyteller Jackie Torrence. "The Accidental Angel" is actually Elizabeth Cotton, a Grammy-award winning musician who was in her nineties when Torrence had a chance to meet and spend some time with her. "God's Maintenance Man" refers to Jackie's stepfather, a man who spent his life fixing all sorts of things, including other people's lives. "The Water Lilies" is a lesson about slowing down our lives so that we can be prepared for rough times ahead, and the "Angels in Disguise" are police

who protect old Miss Sarah Jane Potts, but they only appear to those who mean to do her harm. Short piano vignettes precede each story, adding a great deal to the old fashioned atmosphere deliberately evoked by this tape. Torrence always begins her stories with the title, provides an introduction to the characters, and ends with her signature phrase, "And that's the end of that." A master stylist with a resonant voice and a memorable delivery, she has few equals in the storytelling world. She has such obvious affection for the characters in these personal stories that even skeptical listeners might consider these tales evidence that there are angels of one kind or another in everybody's life.

TORRENCE, JACKIE *My Grandmother's Treasure.* August House, 1993 57 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-328-0 $12.00
Dist. by August House * Gr. 4-12

The title treasure, a dish cloth, may be a treasure only to young Jackie, but it is full of magic and memories and she risks her life to keep it. "The Big Cotton Patch" tells of the lengths to which her grandmother went to secure fresh milk for her children, "Miss Maetroy's Flower Bed" reveals a beautiful way to remember a mother long gone, and "The Strawberry Pie" is a wonderfully funny family story of children who eat a strawberry pie meant for company and of the consequences of their actions. "My Granddaddy's Haint" is a ghost story of sorts, and "The Funeral" tells of two snakes visiting a funeral. Personal stories are perhaps the most difficult to tell well, but Torrence is unquestionably a master. Her personable, warm telling style gives the sense of looking into a family album and leaves listeners with the pleasant feeling of spending time with the colorful characters of Torrence's childhood.

UNDERWOOD, PAULA (TURTLE WOMAN SINGING) *Three Strands in the Braid: Three Native American Learning Stories.* A Tribe of Two Press, 1992 58 min.
Audio Cassette $14.00
Dist. by A Tribe of Two Press Gr. 7-12

The three stories on this tape are identified as "Learning Stories," intended as guides to a greater understanding of the relationship between all living things; they explore timeless themes that reach across culture, gender, and generation, such as love, respect, generosity, and also greed and foolishness. "Who Speaks for Wolf" considers the consequences that occur when one living creature settles in the land of another without consideration for the existing inhabitants, exploring the interaction between native peoples and other creatures as well as that between native peoples and European settlers in the Americas. "Many Circles,

Many Paths" speaks of cultural conflict, and a violent, unwilling-to-learn community of people whose nature is changed over time by Patient Watcher. "Winter White and Summer Gold" focuses on human survival during the changes in season, telling how planning, sacrifice, and love of family not only fill the stomach but also feed the spirit. These stories require sustained concentration and reflection, due to their length and use of metaphor; Underwood has a melodic, attractive voice, and the combination of her telling with background flute music has a mesmerizing effect. While the packaging and delivery strongly indicate that these tales are from the American Indian tradition, the tales themselves are somewhat generic and no specific notes or tribal affiliations are given.

WASHINGTON, DONNA *Live and Learn.* Donna Washington, 1994 40 min.
Audio Cassette $10.00
Dist. by Donna Washington * All ages

Washington lends her smooth style and honey voice to this selection of nine tales from around the world. In a cheery, mischievous tone she presents a West African trickster tale, wherein a greedy Anansi gets his comeuppance from a wise turtle, and a hilarious rendition of the traditional English tale, "The Three Wishes," wherein the ubiquitous sausage is replaced by a sugar-coated jelly doughnut. Washington's retellings have an inherent humor that gives a modern twist to her characters and deliveries: the fairy in "The Three Wishes" is a scowling, exasperated sprite; the froggies in the "The Frog King" have the tone of wheedling, whining toddlers; the spoiled prince in "The Boy Who Wanted the Moon" has a temper tantrum parents (and kids) will recognize, and the three observant little frogs in "The Exploding Frog" are a slapstick comic chorus. Washington's timing is faultless and her vocal characterizations memorable; her retellings are concise and her selections are impeccable. Younger listeners will giggle gleefully at the funny surface level, and more sophisticated listeners will be impressed by the layers of meaning Washington so capably communicates. No source notes are included.

We Like Kids! Good Year, 1995 56 min.
Audio Cassette $13.95 + S&H
Dist. by Addison Wesley Longman PS-Gr. 4

This is an easy-listening selection of eleven traditional tales from as many cultures told by a variety of accomplished storytellers. Bobby Norfolk opens the tape with his energetic retelling of "Anansi the Spider and His Six Sons" (Ghana, West Africa); Fran Stallings tells

"The Brazilian Beetle," which explains how Beetle got its brightly colored wings; Derek Burrows entertains with "El Mucaro" from Puerto Rico, a *pourquoi* tale that tells why Owl only flys at night; Lynn Moroney tells the American Indian Star tale of how "Rooster Crows Up the Sun"; Eth-Noh-Tec (tandem tellers Robert Kikuchi-Yngojo and Nancy Wang) tell "Tanuki and the Magic Fan" from Japan. The audiotape is accompanied by a spiral-bound book of story transcriptions illustrated by kids' drawings; it includes storyteller's notes and handy suggestions for activities to expand a number of the stories. Respected storyteller and folklorist Margaret Read MacDonald authored the book's concluding section on "Storytelling Motifs for the Stories," which includes motif numbers based on the Stith Thompson Motif Index of Folk Literature. A list of the contributing storytellers includes some of the movers and shakers of the storytelling revival, including Jay O'Callaghan, the Folktellers Connie Regan-Blake and Barbara Freeman, and Michael Parent. This would be a strong addition to core storytelling collections in any venue. Brief biographies of the storytellers are included.

Young, Richard Alan and Judy Dockrey Young *Favorite Scary Stories of American Children, for Grades K-3.* August House, 1991 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-175-X $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. K-6

The Youngs selected these fourteen stories for telling from those most requested by their child audiences and from the stories children themselves tell. Some are easily recognized: "The Hobbyahs" (told with ferocious glee by Judy Dockrey Young); "Rap! Rap! Rap!" about the wrapping paper ghost; and the silly tale about a runaway coffin that is finally stopped—with a cough drop. In between these well-worn old tales are gems such as the stone skipping contest between "Skunnee Wundee and the Stone Giant," the outwitting of a greedy giant in "Jack and the Sally-Bally," the exasperation of a statue that has run out of answers in "The Golem," and the haunting tale of "The White Wolf." Both Youngs possess a casual mastery over their material that will help beginning storytellers and library programmers recognize what works in oral narrative presentations. The Youngs tell together and alternately, providing an easy variety in their recording.

Young, Richard Alan and Judy Dockrey Young *Favorite Scary Stories of American Children, for Grades 4-6.* August House, 1991 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-175-X $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 4-6

The Youngs bring a chilling shiver to these nine stories from the American Southwest, the Ozark Mountains, Hawaii, Japan, and Laos. An "Old Raw Head," the ghostly remains of a hog butchering, visits an old man's house seeking restitution for its untimely death; a samurai swordsman betrays and murders his wife, who turns into the "Ghost of Vengeance," and in a rollicking "Wylie and the Hairy Man," Wylie and his mama manage to overcome the evil old conjureman. A tiger tries to fool his human victim's family and move in, but "The Tiger's Eyes" reveal his true identity; an evil woman kills her stepson and serves him for supper, but a little bird's song reveals the truth in "Blood Red Cedar." The stories are entertainingly scary and appropriately gruesome, but not overly sensational. The Youngs share the telling and they are equally deft performers, their effective delivery enhanced by their dramatic pacing and timing. No sources are given.

Young, Richard Alan and Judy Dockrey Young *Ghost Stories from the American Southwest: Ten Spine-Tingling Tales.* August House, 1992 45 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-149-0 $12.00
Dist. by August House Gr. 6-12

With several gruesome images, some funny punchlines, and a few haunting conclusions, the Youngs entertain with a rich diversity of stories, many of which are familiar variations on traditional themes. "Mary Calhoun" carries a dead man on her back, and a ghost mother saves her baby from starvation; the vanishing hitchhiker rides again and a dead man keeps his vow to dance at his sweetheart's wedding. "The Ghost at Chretienne Point" still walks and the blood of the pirate she killed stills boils below the carpet; a widow woman cuts out the entrails of the dead man who has wronged her and uses them to make tripe soup, but the dead man wants them back. The stories, especially those with themes of revenge, lost love, and betrayal, are sure to appeal to junior-high and high-school students. The Youngs alternate telling, their voices deep and resonant, and their style of telling direct and assured. The occasional insertion of an accent or hint of dialect will not distract rapt listeners. No specific sources are given for the ten stories, which notes say were collected in the American Southwest. Musical accompaniment and sound effects add a spice of variety to the tellings.

YOUNG, RICHARD ALAN AND JUDY DOCKREY YOUNG *The Head on the High Road.* August House, 1993. 55 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-334-5. $12.00
Dist. by August House. Gr. 6-12

From the book of the same title comes this collection of eighteen short ghost stories from the American Southwest (the longest is the title story at six and one-half minutes), told alternately by the Youngs. Stories include a variation of "La Llorona," in which a desperate woman drowns her children for the love of a scoundrel; "Call from the Grave," about a frightened girl comforted by a phone call from her deceased grandfather; "The Haunted House at Howe," in which a preacher discovers what's really haunting an old house, and "The El Monte Ghost," about a perfumed spirit smelled but never seen. The Youngs have a story for everyone, presenting a variety of spooky, supernatural, and darkly themed traditional tales and urban legends with both western and Latino elements. These articulate tellers let the narratives speak for themselves, effectively and without high drama. The brevity of the stories and their unembroidered delivery allows listeners to provide their own imaginative details and may well provoke some spontaneous storytelling. Minimal source notes and running times are given.

YOUNG, RICHARD ALAN AND JUDY DOCKREY YOUNG *Ozark Ghost Stories.* August House, 1992. 60 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-211-X. $9.95
Dist. by August House. Gr. 6-12

Some listeners can never get enough scary stories, and notes for this tape include brief but effective comments about the purpose of such tales in the lives of children. The seven stories are well chosen and eerily told, and effective use is made of traditional Ozark folk music to set the appropriate mood. The Youngs have a formidable command of language (especially effective in the chilling tale "Frozen Charlotte," about a stylish young woman who pays the ultimate price for her vanity), and their delivery is startlingly evocative. "Old Raw Head," however, is nearly overpowered by the use of echo effects and "Mary Calhoun" (a variant of the Irish "Mary Culhane and the Dead Man") seems a bit out of place since it is not an Ozark story and there is no indication of any cultural translation. The goriness of the tales (exemplified by a retelling of "Old Walleyes," an Ozark bogeyman tale, and "Pennywinkle," an Ozark variant of the Grimms' "The Juniper Tree" with a creepily horrifying refrain) makes this tape a surefire winner for middle and upper graders. No source notes are included.

Young, Richard Alan and Judy Dockrey *Ozark Tall Tales.* August House, 1992. 48 min.
Audio Cassette ISBN 0-87483-099-0. $9.95
Dist. by August House Gr. 6-12

The husband and wife team of Richard and Judy Dockrey Young have the perfect voices and on-tape personalities for telling tall tales. They obviously understand and enjoy the genre, and their enthusiasm is contagious. Lively Ozark folk instruments such as fiddle and jawharp add to the fun, and the Ozark dialect is accurately and effectively utilized. These twenty-two brief stories have the flavor of anecdotal jokelore, and include the salty "Meanest Man in Arkansaw" (in which a seven-foot-tall terror raids a coon-hunting camp with the words, "I hate to eat and run, boys, but the meanest sonuvvabitch in Arkansas is right behind me"); some tall hunting and fishing stories ("One Bullet Left," "The Best Bait Around," and "The Cold Trailing Coon Dog"); and some examples of cityfolk outwitted by mountainfolk ("The Pallet on the Floor" and "The College Degree"). Unfamiliar words such as "harrow" are defined in context, and many a city slicker who never understood the tales when they read them flattened out in a book will delight in this robust rendition. No source notes or running times are included.

Young, Richard Alan and Judy Dockrey Young *Thet Here Story.* Young Stories, 1996. 45 min.
Video Cassette. $20.00
Dist. by Young Stories Gr. K-6

Dressed in period costume and sitting before a fireplace the Youngs take turns telling these Ozark tall tales. Their demonstration of activities such as spinning, churning butter, peeling potatoes, and knitting adds to the old-fashioned country atmosphere. Fifteen stories are shared: some are short enough to be jokes, but all are funny, including "The Old Woman and Her Pig" (with a lot of effort going into getting that pig over the stile). How do you catch "The Six Pound Crappie?" With a two-pound cricket, of course. "The Dog's Tale" explains why dogs sniff each others' tails upon meeting; "The Cold-Trailin' Coon Dog" can follow a trail that is years old; and "The One-Bullet Hunt" explains how a man caught a bear, a deer, a flock of ducks, a string of bass, and a rabbit with one lone bullet. The Youngs' delivery is jovial and relaxed, and they clearly enjoy pulling their listeners' collective leg. Any curricular unit on tall tales or the Ozark region will be enriched by these stories. No sources are given.

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